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NATIONAL REVIEW

WAL★MART

America's Store and Its Enemies

BY JAY NORDLINGER

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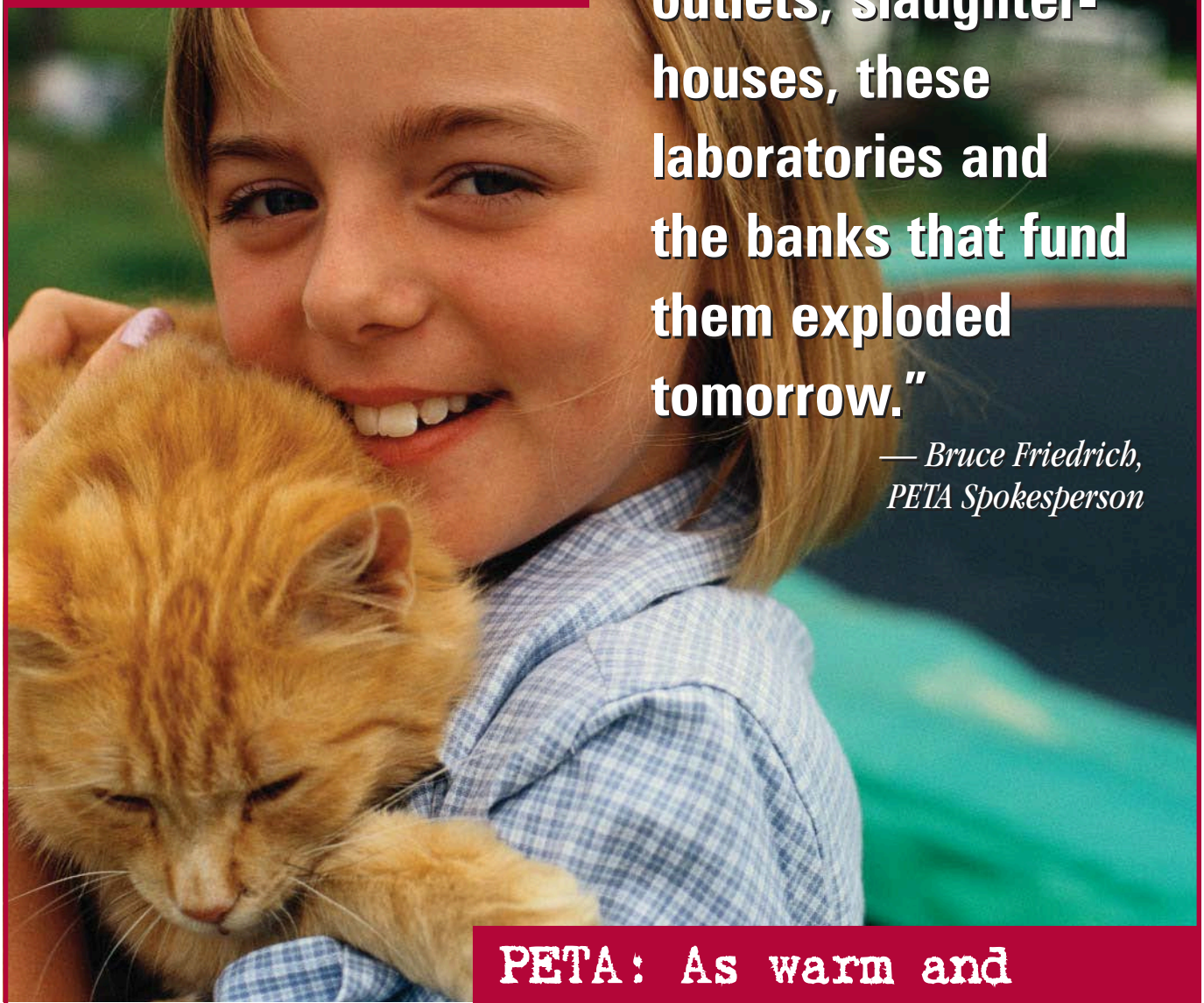

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NATIONAL REVIEW

APRIL 19, 2004 VOL. LVI, NO. 7

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The New Colossus

Who's the biggest, baddest company of them all? Wal-Mart, of course, leader of the *Fortune* 500 list and largest employer in America (next to the government, that is). The company is a classic American success story, and free-market success story. Therefore, it has a lot of enemies—Democratic politicians, union leaders, the *New York Times*, snobs . . . *By Jay Nordlinger*

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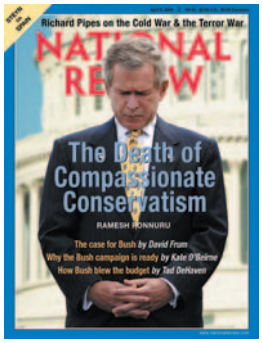
letters to the editor

COMPASSION LIVES

Ramesh Ponnuru claims that compassionate conservatism is dead ("No More Mr. Nice Guy," April 5). It is not. President Bush has helped Congress move the compassion agenda forward through his historic global AIDS relief legislation, faith-based charity initiative, and efforts to continue the progress made under the landmark 1996 welfare reforms, which lifted 2.8 million Americans out of poverty.

For Republicans, compassion means strengthening families and improving lives. Democrats measure compassion by the amount of federal funding spent on social programs. Republicans measure it by results: how many families achieve the dignity that comes with independence. Welfare reform was the first step in liberating millions of families from the cycle of dependency, and Congress is working now to build on that success through welfare-reform reauthorization.



The goal of compassionate conservatism is to build a civil society, with government spurring communities to do more to help those in need. Addressing poverty in this way is the only viable alternative to the liberal answer: the welfare state. President Bush has made this kind of conservatism a hallmark of his administration. He deserves our praise for it.

Sen. Rick Santorum (R., Pa.)
Washington, D.C.

UNSUNG HERO

I'd like to pass along a note of gratitude for John J. Miller's moving portrait of Arthur Nicholson ("Our Last Cold War Casualty," April 5). The printed word is seldom better put to use than when it teaches us about brave men and women who, without thought of public acclaim, risk all to do their duty in the service of others. In honoring Nicholson, John Miller honors the human spirit, just as Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* and Yad Vashem's "Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations" rescue heroes and martyrs from the anonymity to which evil men would consign them.

I gain much from NATIONAL REVIEW's customarily trenchant treatment of topics of the day, and from its other features. Miller's piece merits special thanks.

Michael Horowitz
Hudson Institute
Washington, D.C.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

David Gelernter's "What 'Republican' Should Mean" (March 8) was right on the money, particularly with regard to one of our greatest national problems: the undemocratic, indeed antidemocratic, abuse of the courts to promote a left-wing agenda. Important policies should be decided by the people through their elected representatives or by direct voting. Our jurisprudence has various doctrines of judicial restraint, including one called "political questions": When an appellate court's decision might preempt the political process, the court should recuse itself in deference to the legislature.

Let's protect our treasured American experiment of government "of, by, and for the people."

John A. McVickar
Richmond, Va.

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for the record

"Oh, I plow the field, Greta takes care of the house, and young Johann there maintains the website."

■ In *Newsweek* poll of registered voters, President **Bush** leads Sen. **John Kerry** (D., Mass.), 45 percent to 43 percent. . . . Bush: "The war on terror is not a figure of speech. It is an inescapable calling of our generation." . . . In AP poll, 60 percent say Bush is "a strong leader," versus 32 percent for Kerry. . . . Vice President **Dick Cheney**, at Reagan Presidential Library: "We are applying the Bush doctrine: Any person or government that supports, protects, or harbors terrorists is complicit in the murder of the innocent, and will be held to account." . . . More Cheney: "Had the decision belonged to Senator Kerry, **Saddam Hussein** would still be in power today in Iraq. In fact, Saddam Hussein would almost certainly still be in control of Kuwait." . . . Sen. **Ted Kennedy** (D., Mass.), on *Meet the Press*: "If John Kerry had been president of the United States with that vote, we never, I don't believe, [would have] gone to war, certainly not at that time. He would have worked through the inspection system. He would have worked through the international kinds of systems, and I don't personally believe that we would have gone to war."

■ National security adviser **Condoleezza Rice** on former terrorism official **Richard Clarke**, on Fox News: "I can't judge his motives. I do know that the timing of [his] book is a little suspicious." . . . Sen. **Joe Lieberman** (D., Conn.) on Clarke's accusations: "I see no basis for it." . . . Sen. **Jon Kyl** (R., Ariz.): "Until Dick Clarke produces his detailed strategy memo that would have have toppled the Taliban government in record time, captured or killed two-thirds of known al-Qaeda leaders, bolstered dramatically intelligence-sharing here at home, and assembled one of the greatest global coalitions in history to go after terrorists all over the world, I'll find it hard to believe he had a better plan for fighting terrorism than George W. Bush." . . . Clarke says he voted for Al Gore in 2000, on *Meet the Press*. . . . In Zogby poll, 51 percent say "if a major terrorist attack" hits U.S. they would prefer Bush as president, versus 40 percent favoring Kerry. . . . Sen. **Chuck Hagel** (R., Neb.) on whether he thinks Kerry is weak on defense, on ABC: "No, I don't, and I tend to agree with **John McCain** on this. The facts just don't measure the rhetoric."

■ Kerry foreign-policy adviser **Rand Beers**: "It is simply not appropriate for any foreign leader to endorse a candidate in America's presidential election. John Kerry does not seek, and will not accept, any such endorsements." . . . Sen. **Zell Miller** (D., Ga.) starts Democrats for Bush, tells *Washington Times*: "Frankly, I've had it up to here with the politicians who claim to represent my party but really represent nothing but special-interest groups and their own partisan agenda." . . . Democratic representatives who haven't endorsed Kerry: **Rodney Alexander** (La.), **Allen Boyd** (Fla.), **Jim Marshall** (Ga.), **Dennis Moore** (Kan.), and **Jim Matheson** (Utah).

■ Sen. **Kent Conrad** (D., N.D.) on Republicans: "They have no credibility on fiscal issues to begin with. They're going to take us right over the fiscal cliff." . . . RNC documents 350 Kerry votes in favor of higher taxes and against tax cuts. . . . Cato Institute president **Ed Crane** on **Grover Norquist**'s Americans for Tax Reform conferring "Hero of the Taxpayer Award" on Sen. **Arlen Specter** (R., Penn.), in *The Hill*: "utterly inexcusable." . . . **Bill Clinton**: "**Howard Dean** was the first person who legitimized it for all of us to say we don't like what's going on here." . . . **Jimmy Carter** issues plea to **Ralph Nader**: "Don't risk costing the Democrats the White House this year as you did four years ago." . . . As Senate passes bill on unborn victims of violence, Sen. **Dianne Feinstein** (D., Calif.) attacks pro-lifers: "This will be the first strike against all abortion in the United States of America."

■ In Florida *Sun-Sentinel* poll, only 48 percent of Cuban Americans say they'll "definitely" vote for Bush. . . . Gov. **Jeb Bush** (R., Fla.), in *Washington Post*: "Groups such as the Congressional Black Caucus, who claim to support democracy yet focus on [former president Jean-Bertrand] **Aristide**'s election, exacerbate his betrayal of the Haitian people." . . . In Colorado, 52 percent of voters support state's new school-choice plan and 62 percent believe students who participate will improve academically, according to Public Opinion Strategies poll. . . . Judge invalidates ballot language of **Ward Connerly**'s Michigan Civil Rights Initiative. . . . In McLaughlin & Associates poll, 61 percent support abolishing estate tax. . . . Cato Institute's first Milton Friedman Award for Advancing Liberty, worth $500,000, goes to **Hernando de Soto.**

■ Spain's Socialist prime minister-elect, **José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero**, according to *International Herald Tribune*: "We're aligning ourselves with Kerry." . . . In French regional elections, Socialists rout party of President **Jacques Chirac**. . . . **Tony Blair** becomes first British prime minister since **Winston Churchill** to visit Tripoli: "Libya's voluntary and open implementation of that decision [to disarm] gives us real hope that we can build a new relationship with it, one for the modern world." . . . Former Malaysian prime minister and famous anti-Semite **Mahathir Mohamad**: "I think Kerry would be much more willing to listen to the voices of people and of the rest of the world." . . . Canada close to passing bill banning human cloning.

■ Gov. **Mitt Romney** (R., Mass.) on Kerry's two marriages to wealthy women, in *Boston Herald*: "He's not kidding when he says he's going after the rich." **NR**

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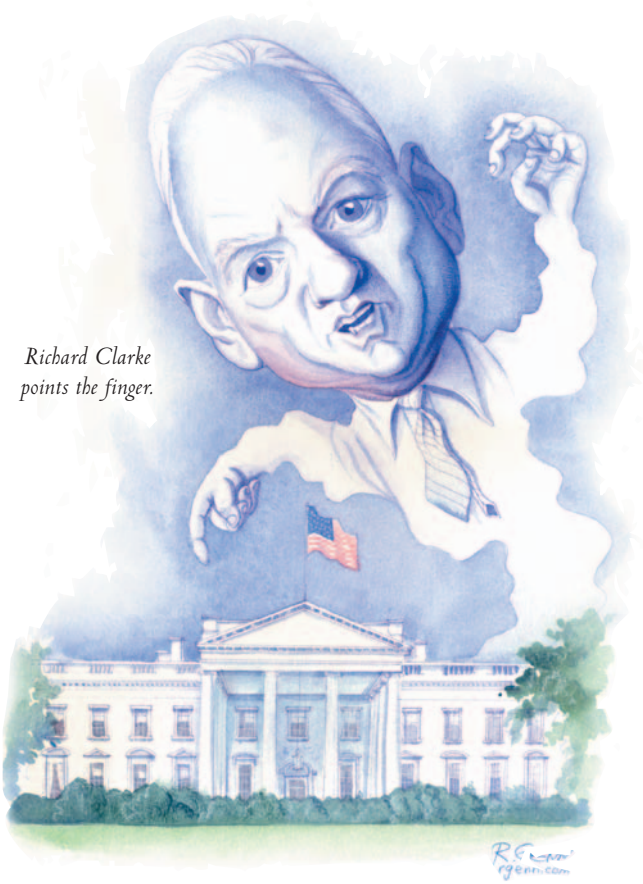
THE WEEK

■ Barney Frank, defending same-sex marriage, notes that it would not be "mandatory." Sure—that's what they always say, at first.

■ Richard Clarke, former counterterrorism expert for Presidents Clinton and Bush, began his testimony before the 9/11 commission with an apology: "Your government failed you. Those entrusted with protecting you failed you. And I failed you. We tried hard. But that doesn't matter, because we failed. And for that failure, I would ask, once all the facts are out, for your understanding and for your forgiveness." Moralists warn against the spurious sorrow that afflicts the first-person plural of so many collective apologies: *We* erred, says the penitent, though he clearly intends to shift blame and odium to his fellows. Clarke has now developed a first-person singular that apes this dubious plural: *I* ask for understanding and forgiveness for *our* misdeeds—meaning that Bush, Rice, and the other bums don't deserve it. Clarke's supposed honesty was moral preening. Did we mention he has a book out?

■ "Outsourcing" is to this election year what "downsizing" was to 1996. Then as now, the economy had substantial underlying strength. But news reports at the start of the year were dominated by the theme that brutal competition was endangering the jobs of a new class of American workers: middle managers then, white-collar professionals now. Then as now, not many people were actually affected by the alleged trend. But John Kerry has bought this year's storyline, and proposed a corporate-tax plan designed entirely to show that he would "do something" about outsourcing. What he would do is raise taxes on American companies' overseas earnings, or at least some of them. Perhaps this proposal will discourage American companies from investing overseas. But since American companies' overseas investment tends to generate increased employment in the U.S., that's a bad thing. Moreover, some American companies may decide to move their headquarters overseas to avoid the Kerry tax. The senator's other tax proposals—hiking taxes on dividends and on high earners—will depress American investment generally. This is perverse. But that is what comes of building tax policy around a talking point.

■ Do you suppose that John Edwards is interested in his party's vice-presidential nomination? Well, listen to this. Said the North Carolina senator (for now), "We are fortunate because John Kerry has strength and vision, which he has proven at every step of his accomplished lifetime. He has been brilliant and thoughtful and courageous beyond most of our imaginings. [No, really, he said this.] He has, too, an iron will that did not waver in this process [the Democratic primaries] . . ." Etc. If you will permit us a translation: *I'm not running for reelection to the Senate, my presidential campaign went south pretty quickly, I have nothing to do, I may be forgotten by the next time around, please, please, please . . .*"



Richard Clarke points the finger.

ROMAN GENN

■ John McCain for secretary of defense—President Kerry's secretary of defense, that is? Well, why not? Take the reasons, from ig- to noble. McCain dislikes George W. Bush, and nurses a grudge from the 2000 primaries. McCain has vouched for Kerry's toughness on defense (though he qualified it by adding that Kerry would have to be judged on his record). McCain, however frisky he might be feeling, could not be Kerry's running mate, given his own Republican record and the temper of the Democratic party; but presidents have reached out to cabinet secretaries of the other party—Henry Stimson, John Connally, Bill Cohen. McCain would be a voice of reason and firmness in a Kerry cabinet—what others would there be? McCain has spoken of his career, most notably at the 2000 Philadelphia convention, in wistful terms. Crossing the aisle into the cabinet would be a gratifying, and possibly useful, way to end it.

■ The Washington press dinner at which presidents make self-deprecating appearances is a tribal custom valued by those who

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The Week...

work in the Beltway, incomprehensible to those outside it. Either it is a welcome exercise in humility, a saturnalia in which the most powerful man on earth mocks himself and is mocked; or it is a chummy conclave in which guests and audience feed on in-jokes, and revel in their proximity to one another. President Bush has a droll streak that serves him well at such rituals, though a man as obsessed with time as he is must hate the waste. He did himself no favors at the 60th Radio and Television Correspondents' Dinner, when he included, in his routine, a series of jokes about looking for elusive WMD. Would FDR have yukked about the Bulge or Anzio? In war, even licensed farces should observe decorum.

■ They've got to be chugging Maalox in the headquarters of Arlen Specter, who is facing conservative congressman Pat Toomey in Pennsylvania's April 27 Republican Senate primary. A mid-March statewide poll of people who say they are "certain" to vote shows Toomey coming on strong, slashing the liberal Republican's once-sizeable lead in half. It's now in single digits (Specter leads 47 to 38 percent). And a late-March survey of GOP voters in the Philadelphia area, Specter's political base, shows that his 24 years in Congress have not bought the incumbent strong support. Only 46 percent of Republicans there back him, while 33 percent support Toomey. Worse for Specter, there is clearly room for Toomey to grow. A bare majority of self-proclaimed pro-lifers and conservatives currently supports Specter, many no doubt because he is so familiar to them. Toomey enjoys solid backing from the Club for Growth, and will be able to get his message out. Which is one more reason for the worst Republican senator to worry.

■ Washington is learning, to its astonishment, that the expansion of Medicare it enacted this winter is turning out to be more expensive than it had expected—although quotation marks need to be placed around the words "learning," "astonishment," and "expected." Before the bill passed, the Bush administration claimed that it would cost $400 billion over ten years. It has since upped the figure to $534 billion. Medicare's trustees have issued a report showing that, in part because of the expansion, the program is going bankrupt even faster than previously thought. A mini-scandal has now erupted. The administration appears to have known that $400 billion was too low and to have withheld the information from Congress. So the administration has some explaining to do. But so do the congressmen who voted yes. All serious people knew that the cost would be higher. Every entitlement ends up costing more than it is first said to cost. No serious person believes that $534 billion figure either. The administration may have been lying to congressmen, but the congressmen were also lying to themselves. As cost projections are adjusted each year, they can expect to be surprised at regular intervals.

■ In many states, assaults on pregnant women are treated as assaults on their unborn children as well. California, for example, is trying Scott Peterson for double homicide. Now that the Unborn Victims of Violence Act has passed Congress, federal law will soon follow the same rule: Where the assault or murder of a woman is a federal crime, any unborn child she is carrying will be counted as a second victim. Pro-abortion senators, aghast at the thought that unborn children would receive legal protections under any circumstances, even when their mothers were eager to have them, fought the bill. With the help of Arlen Specter, they almost amended the bill out of existence. But when the bill was finally put to the vote, most senators were unwilling to tell crime victims' families that they had not lost a child. Sixty-one senators voted for the bill. (John Kerry voted against.) The House had already passed it. President Bush's signature will mark the first time federal law has recognized a right to life for the unborn at all stages of pregnancy. Against one type of assault, at least, they will be protected.

■ There's good news and bad news to report in the continuing struggle to confirm President Bush's judicial nominees. The bad news is that Democrats have made the situation even worse. The good news is, Mike Wallace is on our side. First the bad. Senate Democrats now say they will block all—every single one—of the White House's judicial nominees unless President Bush promises not to make any more recess appointments to the federal bench. The president has exercised that constitutional authority twice so far, both in cases in which Democrats filibustered his nominees. But Democrats demand that he pledge never to do it again. On the good-news side, *60 Minutes* aired a report on the case of Charles Pickering, the Mississippi judge filibustered by Democrats who charged he was "insensitive" to racial issues. Correspondent Wallace looked into the infamous cross-burning case in which Democrats accused Pickering of being soft on a racist criminal. Wallace concluded that there was pretty much nothing to the Democratic charges. Pickering is now on the federal court of appeals, thanks to one of those recess appointments that Democrats hate. Given their intransigence, the time is ripe for some more of them.

■ Justice Scalia may not have realized that a duck-hunting trip with his old friend Dick Cheney would end in his becoming the prey. But ever since then the justice has been ducking bullets, with critics saying that he should recuse himself from a pending

The Two Clarkes

Which to believe? The farewell note
Oozed bonhomie; the book he wrote
Was seasoned so with cyanide,
One's thoughts returned to Mr. Hyde
When Dr. Jekyll quaffed that brew:
That's when I realized—you too?—
What this guy needs before the brink
Engulfs him is a first-class shrink.

—W. H. von Dreele

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Some Sobering Thoughts on Pakistan's Future—*and Ours*

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The revelation that Pakistani scientists have transmitted knowledge about atomic weapons to Iran and Libya refocuses our attention on this troubled ally. President Pervez Musharraf, a survivor of many assassination attempts, is despised by those who desire to impose a Taliban-type regime on the nation. If a military junta armed with nuclear weapons and sympathetic to radical Islamists took over, the outcome could be disastrous.

President Musharraf's most implacable enemies are fundamentalist Islamic groups whose members are found in parliament, the army, the intelligence services (SIS), the intelligentsia, and government. Indeed, the Pakistani army and SIS were instrumental in the Taliban's coming to power in Afghanistan.

The hostility toward President Musharraf stems from his cooperation with the United States and his policies toward India and the Kashmir region. His enemies hope to undermine him by fanning the flames of dissatisfaction. **We can help Pakistan achieve stability by discouraging policies that create unrest and encouraging policies that will benefit the struggling population.**

Some policies should be immediately dropped, including the president's well-intentioned land reform program. Although half of Pakistan's population is engaged in rudimentary agriculture, in country after country, government redistribution of private property has failed.

The government ought to also abandon attempts to impose Urdu as the official language. Only 8 percent of Pakistanis were Urdu speakers in 2003, with surveys indicating that more than half the population prefers to have their children taught in English because it is the lingua franca of the government and the elite. Pakistan should take a lesson from India, which has shown that allowing linguistic groups greater autonomy creates a stake for these provinces to stay within the union.

The government also needs to raise the level of literacy. Less than half the population is currently literate, in part due to policies that favor higher education at the expense of wider availability of elementary education. A better-educated public would make Pakistan much more attractive for direct foreign investment—thus bettering the lives of ordinary citizens.

The United States must encourage Pakistan to divert a greater portion of its GNP toward elementary and secondary education for women. Among many benefits, educated women tend to have fewer children and those children are healthier and attain higher levels of education than do children of uneducated women.

Poor economic prospects have forced university and high school graduates to migrate to the gulf countries, Western Europe, and the United States. That trend must be slowed and eventually reversed. Economic prospects at home would improve if Pakistan liberalized its economy. The United States can help by extending its program that provides credit and business development services to micro-entrepreneurs to Pakistan.

Lastly, Pakistan and other countries, including the United States, must convince Saudi Arabia to support secular schools instead of funding radical Islamic schools—these madrassas have been hotbeds for terrorism.

Reform and stability will not come easily. But **we must help President Musharraf create a more open economy, a freer political system, a broader educational system, and greater respect for provincial authority.** If he does not succeed, we will likely face very unpleasant consequences.

—Guity Nashat

Guity Nashat is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and an associate professor of history at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

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case involving Cheney's energy task force. He has now explained his reasons for not doing so. The vice president is being sued in his official, not personal, capacity. It would be "intolerable," writes Scalia, to "give elements of the press a veto over participation of any justices who had social contacts with, or were even known to be friends of, a named official." No such standard has ever been imposed. He notes that it would have been easy for him to "silence the criticism" by "getting off the case," but writes that he could not do so "in good conscience." Traditionally, it is up to justices to decide whether to recuse themselves from a case. If Scalia's judgment that he can be impartial in this case cannot be trusted, he should not be on the Supreme Court in the first place. Which, for the critics, may be the point.

■ No child is required to say the Pledge of Allegiance in public schools. If Michael Newdow, the atheist plaintiff in the Pledge case now before the Supreme Court, wishes to instruct his daughter to join the Jehovah's Witnesses in abstaining from the ceremony, he may. Thus his campaign against the phrase "under God" is not an assertion of a liberty, but an effort to scrape philosophy from public life. The Founders were emphatic that there be no national creed or cult, yet even the most heterodox of them believed that God made our natures, and therefore our liberties, and that Providence watches us (however darkly). Jefferson, the homemade philosophe, wrote of the laws of "Nature's God"; Washington, the Anglican deist freemason, exclaimed "So help me God" after taking the first presidential oath of office. These notions are reflected in settled public customs—"under God" has been in the Pledge for 50 years, "In God We Trust" on coins for 140. Such phrases reflect both a hope that our country will be sustained, and a conviction that it will be, so long as we behave justly. Justice includes defending the rights of Mr. Newdow, but that does not mean allowing him to dictate the reasons that we do so.

■ Why are gasoline prices on the rise? Unexpectedly strong demand from China and India is the main culprit driving higher world crude prices. Balkanized gasoline markets in the United States are also leaving some markets short by depriving them of the ability to bring in gasoline from more flush locales. There is no reason to overreact. Prices are not setting records. We're a long way from 1981, when gas was selling at $2.36 a gallon (adjusting for inflation). Prices are only a nickel higher than they were a year ago. The Left thinks that Jimmy Carter is finally being proven right, albeit 25 years too late: We're running out of oil. But the value of proven oil reserves is dropping, not rising. The Right, meanwhile, is blaming environmentalists for blocking development in the U.S. But the restrictions, whatever their wisdom, do not affect enough oil to make a difference in the global market. The truth is that the market is mostly working, as it usually does.

■ On August 9, 2001, President Bush announced that the federal government would fund research on stem cells that had already been taken from human embryos, but would not provide funding that encouraged the destruction of any more embryos. He said that "more than 60" stem-cell lines were eligible for funding. He also said that he would appoint a council "to monitor stem-cell research" (among other things). That council has issued a report titled, appropriately enough, *Monitoring Stem Cell Research,* which dispels much of the confusion that has arisen about the Bush policy in the interim. It turns out that there are 78 eligible lines. But 16 of them are not usable. It has taken time for the others to become available to researchers. There are both technical and legal reasons for this delay, unrelated to the president's policy. Seventeen lines are now available for research, and that number is increasing by the quarter. The director of the National Institutes of Health told the council, "I don't think the limiting factor is the cell lines. I really don't. I really think the limiting factor is human capital and trained human capital that can quickly evaluate a wide range of research avenues in stem cells." The council's report does not attempt to settle the moral issues surrounding stem-cell research. Supporters and opponents of the research may still conclude that Bush set the boundaries incorrectly. But much of the debate has proceeded on the basis of misinformation about the practical consequences of his policy, and this report should help to clear it up.

■ The Kass council has followed up that report by issuing a set of recommendations about embryo research. The suggestions were made unanimously; both supporters and opponents of the research were able to agree on them. The first proposal is that Congress set an age limit to such research. Some members of the council would ban research on embryos older than 14 days. Others would set the number at ten, or zero. All agree on the need for a limit past which no research would be legal, let alone funded by the federal government. A second recommendation is that Congress make it illegal to create a human embryo with the intent to transfer it to a woman's body to begin a pregnancy. The permissivists on the council are trying to spin these recommendations as a victory for their side. Supposedly the council has endorsed research that destroys very young embryos, with the implication that federal funds should be directed there. Supposedly it has also blessed research cloning. But these conclusions do not follow. The council is silent on whether any cloning, and any research that destroys human embryos, should be legal. Its previous recommendation of a moratorium on all cloning thus stands. We are therefore pleased to join in the unanimity, and urge swift congressional passage of the council's proposals.

■ After the Supreme Court approved the University of Michigan's color-coded admissions system last summer, Ward Connerly and other foes of racial preferences sprang into action. They organized the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, modeled on Connerly's previous successes in California and Washington. Supporters drafted ballot language, had it approved by Michigan's Board of Canvassers, and began collecting the approximately 317,000 signatures needed to put the measure before voters in November. Early polls suggested that the

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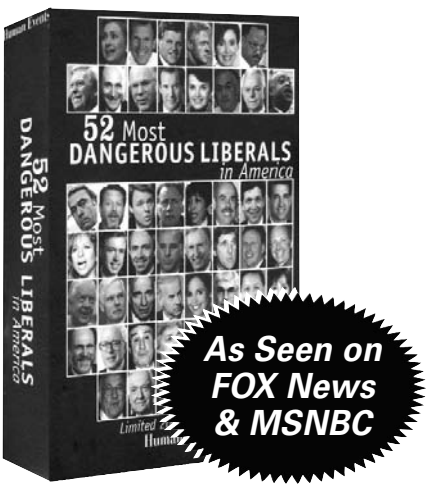

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A
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(D.-NY)
"I'm not going to have some reporters pawing through our papers. We are the President."
— Hillary Clinton
8
"We must uphold the promise of Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Carter, and Clinton and never allow the President and his Republican friends to threaten Social Security by putting it on the Wall Street trading block."
— John Kerry
JOKER
"As long as the Republicans keep serving up the same worthless ideas, the American people won't care who's running the GOP."
— James Carville
"When I'm President, we'll do executive orders to overcome any wrong thing the Supreme Court does tomorrow or any other day."
— Dick Gephardt
K

"52 Most Dangerous Liberals in America" Card Deck

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THE WEEK...

MCRI would pass. But on March 25, Ingham County circuit judge Paula Manderfield ordered the Board of Canvassers to yank its approval of the ballot language because she felt it "boldly regurgitates" a few lines in the state constitution banning racial discrimination. Of course it does: Racial preferences are a form of racial discrimination. And the victims often are the people who are meant to benefit. One of the reasons that black graduation rates at the University of Michigan and elsewhere lag behind those of whites and Asian Americans is that preferences admit them into an academic environment for which they have not been prepared. This is a failure of K-12 public schooling—and it's a problem that neither universities nor courts can rectify.

■ Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the wheelchair-bound founder of Hamas whom the Israelis wheeled to kingdom come with a few well-aimed missiles, was known as Hamas's "spiritual leader." Mass murderers can have spiritual values—Himmler was interested in the occult—but they are all diabolical. Yassin was a noxious old mouther—"From the first drop of blood" that a suicide bomber "spills on the ground, he goes to Paradise," he said, while "the Jewish victims immediately go to Hell." His replacement, a former pediatrician named Abdel Aziz Rantisi, has carried on in the same vein: "Bush is the enemy of God. . . . God declared war against America, Bush, and Sharon." Israel has every right to institute a program of extreme early retirement for such types. Will it "work"? Will attacks in Israel diminish? Can Hamas be deterred? (Yassin advocated suicide bombing for others, including Palestinian children, not for himself or his brood.) In the face of such pathology, the options are few.

■ The use of Palestinian children as bomb-delivery devices came in for some unanticipated criticism when a cameraman for Associated Press Television News captured footage of Hussam Abdo, a very scared and very gullible 16-year-old, surrendering at an Israeli checkpoint. He revealed 18 pounds of explosives underneath his sweater. The Palestinian public, which has heretofore kept silent even as teenagers blew themselves and innocents up, was stirred to issue a "rare rebuke to militant factions" (as the *New York Times* delicately put it). No, no, not about the ethics of suicide bombing or the nihilistic destruction of civilians, but the idea of sending kids to do a man's job. Mused Mrs. Abdo, "Maybe if he is 20, then perhaps I could understand," referring to her own son. "At that age they know what they are doing, they are fighting for their homeland." Well, we guess every society has its coming-of-age ritual.

■ Why is it that, like William J. Clinton, U.N. secretary general Kofi Annan consistently leaves behind him a trail of destruction amid the odor of carelessness? (And how is it that both of them keep managing to get away with it?) The Rwandan genocide happened on Mr. Annan's languid watch as head of U.N. Peacekeeping Operations; though alerted that something wicked this way was coming, he did not act to forestall the massacre. In 1999, when Mr. Annan was secretary general, the U.N. told the East Timorese to vote for independence and never mind all those signals that the Indonesians were preparing a murderous retaliation. "Nobody in his wildest dreams thought what we are witnessing could happen," declared Mr. Annan once the killings began. And now we hear of a massive U.N. oil-for-food scandal involving several billion dollars in bribes and kickbacks to Saddam Hussein's regime. Annan says that "there is a lot that is being dumped on the Secretariat, which is not fair." Perhaps that's true, but it's strike three and Kofi needs to go.

■ UNESCO awarded the World Press Freedom Prize to Raúl Rivero Castaneda, a Cuban journalist. Rivero, who once worked for the state news agency, founded an independent news agency in 1995 and an independent association of Cuban journalists in 2001. But what need do such institutions serve under the conditions of socialism, except subversion? Hence Rivero was arrested in 2003, and given a 20-year sentence. The Cuban government called the prize "embarrassing," as indeed it is—or would be, to any government not armored against reflection or shame.

■ An election is coming up in the Republic of South Africa, and incumbent president Thabo Mbeki, addressing a rally, wished to impress on followers of his African National Congress the folly of voting for the opposition African Christian Democrats. President Mbeki's way of doing this was to point to a poster of ACD leader Kenneth Meshoe and remark: "If my sister came to me and said she was in love with that man, I would take a whip to her." This came a day or two after Mbeki's deputy president, Jacob Zuma, said that the ANC would rule South Africa until Christ returned to earth. Bearing in mind Matthew 24:42 (". . . ye know not what hour your Lord doth come"), it is hard to say which is the more maladroit, Mr. Mbeki's Nietzschean misogyny or Mr. Zuma's misapprehended eschatology.

■ Al Franken, the comedian and author, is a bright and talented guy. We're about to see whether his talents transfer to the radio, where he is just starting a show, clumsily and derivatively named "The O'Franken Factor." There just may be enough left-wingers alienated from the mainstream media to provide an audience base for such a program. The market will soon speak. As for us, we can't wait to hear Franken's first show—and his last.

■ Manfully resisting the temptation to open this paragraph with the words "Move over, Eve Ensler!" we note the forthcoming appearance of a rap opera with the title *The Viagra Monologues*. The composer, and apparently also the librettist, of this potent work is 67-year-old Major Owens, who represents a New York City district in Congress. The opera, says Congressman Owens, explores male sexuality and monogamy. Toward the latter, it seems ambiguously disposed, to judge from some of the sample lyrics so far published: "If Wilt had twenty thousand, / My share is more than one, / Monogamy is for chumps, / Diversity is mandated fun." (The first line refers to the basketball great

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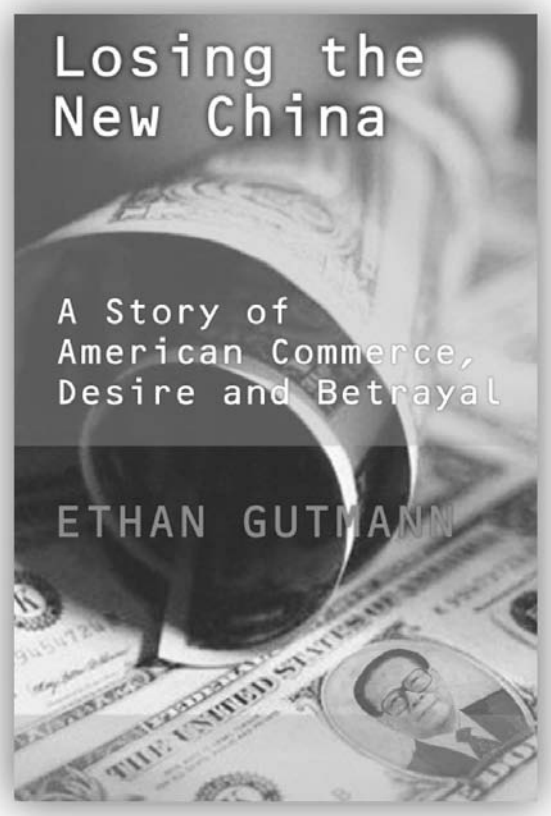

"American business is making a corrupt and potentially dangerous bargain with China's dictatorship. Gutmann tells this disturbing story as no one has dared to before from the inside, sparing nothing and nobody."

—Arthur Waldron, University of Pennsylvania

In 2000 Ethan Gutmann found himself in Beijing searching for the New China. Taking a job at a public relations firm he experienced the fast lane life style in which huge bribes, meals of Mandarin elegance, and the favors of exotic Mongolian prostitutes were as much a part of daily commerce as contracts and balance sheets.

In *Losing the New China*, Gutmann recounts a dramatic personal odyssey But he also gives an insider's account of the rapidly modernizing country the American commercial presence is helping to create. He shows how massive foreign investment generated prosperity in China—and also a feverish new nationalism that surged into China's universities, dot.coms, and entrepreneurial centers. He describes the amoral deal-making in which American commerce continues to provide the Peoples' Liberation Army with the latest military technology, and shows how companies such as Cisco, Sun Microsystems, and Yahoo!, gave Chinese authorities the technology to monitor, sanitize, and ultimately isolate the Chinese web, creating the world's greatest Big Brother Internet.

Filled with character and event, *Losing the New China* is a fascinating chronicle of the business and personal lives of strangers in a strange land. Ethan Gutmann shows us how the Goddess of Democracy that once stood in Tiananmen Square was replaced by the Gods of Mars and Mammon that dominate China today.

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The Week...

Wilt Chamberlain, who claimed to have shared his favor with 20,000 women.) A spokes-harpy from the National Organization for Women denounced Congressman Owens's efforts in predictable terms: "What I do find offensive is that he is playing off the name of 'The Vagina Monologues,' which has a lot to do with women's freedom and sexuality . . ." All together now: "Q—How many feminists does it take to screw in a light bulb? A—That's not funny!"

■ Under way is the trial of Donna Mills, the Manhattan supreme court justice who, in a spirit of Dionysian merriment, used her father's Rolls-Royce to play bumper cars with a few vehicles parked near the NYPD's 50th Precinct station. Unsurprisingly, this piqued the attention of two of New York's finest. Through the clouds of inebriation, Mills—ever the public servant—inquired of the officers, "Did I hit anything? Did I hurt anyone?" Her modern public servant's sense of justice then kicked in: "You're arresting me because I'm black. If I was a white male, this wouldn't be happening." (That one of the cars she hit belonged to a local policeman—and that she "reeked of alcohol and . . . couldn't stand"—clearly had nothing to do with it.) Nope, the only possible motivation was racism—especially since the cops involved were themselves minorities. Officer Jessica Sterling testified, "I'm a Hispanic woman, and my partner is black . . . I couldn't believe an educated woman would say something like that." Believe it, honey. In America, Sisters are doing it for themselves—and, evidently, *to* themselves.

■ You know Richard Simmons, the boyish 55-year-old begetter of numerous videos promoting cardiovascular fitness, with titles like "Sweatin' to the Oldies." Newspapers generally prefix Mr. Simmons's name with some such epithets as "flamboyant." Well, Mr. Simmons was making his lissome way through Phoenix airport one day recently when 6-ft., 1-in., 255-lb. motorcycle salesman Chris Farley called out, "Look, Richard Simmons! Drop your bags! Let's rock to the '50s!" Taking mighty umbrage at this, our epicene exercise enthusiast confronted Mr. Farley, told him, "It's not nice to make fun of people with issues," then slapped his face. Mr. Farley called the police, who proceeded to issue a ticket to the callipygian czar of calisthenics. End of story—except that we can't help wondering how Mr. Farley will ever live down the fact that he was slapped across the face by Richard Simmons.

AT WAR

20/40 Hindsight

Richard Clarke, the former Clinton and Bush counterterrorism official who has become famous by criticizing President Bush, is a complicated case. On one hand, he was one of the more acute officials in the Clinton administration. He consistently warned about the threat of al-Qaeda and pushed for more aggressive action against it. In the early days of the Bush administration, he was also a strong voice for action. On the other hand, Clarke has now made himself an anti-Bush partisan willing to skate over important facts and offer tendentious interpretations of events to cast the Bush team in the worst possible light. The stench of opportunism is unmistakable around Clarke. It emanates primarily not from his book and its marketing, but from his liberal admirers.

Make no mistake: Clarke's essential case against Bush is that he continued Clinton's policy too long. Bush didn't bomb and pour resources into CIA covert action soon enough. This would make the eager liberal embrace of Clarke, uh, counterintuitive, if it weren't that the operating principle of the Left has become "whatever hurts Bush . . ." Should the Bush team have acted on Clarke's ideas for Afghanistan, such as pumping aid to the Northern Alliance, sooner? Yes. But as Clarke himself has said, acting on these proposals would not have prevented 9/11. Nor would more high-level meetings in the summer of 2001 likely have thwarted the plot, as Clarke suggests. Until 9/11, the U.S. government suffered from systemic problems that kept it from effectively dealing with a terror threat on its own shores. The Patriot Act has helped to change that, but it is nonetheless almost universally reviled by Dick Clarke's new fans. What's that smell?

The stench of opportunism is unmistakable around Clarke. It emanates primarily not from his book and its marketing, but from his liberal admirers.

In his eagerness to zing Bush, Clarke belies his reputation as a serious analyst of terrorism. He told Lesley Stahl of CBS that the attack on Spain is evidence that the invasion of Iraq has backfired. This is absurd. Al-Qaeda committed acts of terrorism all through the 1990s and on September 11, while the U.S. was happy to keep "containing" Saddam. Some resources may have temporarily been diverted from the hunt for bin Laden to the Iraq invasion, but the Iraq war overwhelmingly involved U.S. forces that never would have been involved in a bin Laden manhunt. In any case, the search for the Qaeda leader is on again in full force, mainly because it's springtime in Afghanistan and President Musharraf of Pakistan finally seems ready to scour the tribal areas of his country.

Clarke and his allies insufficiently appreciate the long-term benefit of taking an Arab country away from radicalism and creating an oasis of decent government there. They make a fetish of the alleged statelessness of al-Qaeda. Yet if the terror group does not have a direct sponsor, in the manner of other terror groups, that does not mean that states—and the general geopolitical situation in the Middle East—are irrelevant to its health. As David Frum puts it, "If the Saudis had cut off the flow of funds to al-Qaeda, if Afghanistan had denied al-Qaeda its territory, if Pakistan had not formed a tacit alliance with al-Qaeda and the Taliban, if radical governments like Iraq had not incited anti-American and anti-Western extremism, and if moderate governments like Egypt had not appeased it—minus

Continued on page 16

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*Wm. F. Buckley Jr. * 215 Lexington Avenue*
New York, NY 10016

March 10, 2004

Dear Alistair:

I brooded over the news you gave me, trying to think how I might express myself. I decided on a device I have never used before, and will never use again: I have written the short obituary I will publish in National Review *at the appropriate time. I confide it to you. And look forward to our visit on Monday. XB*

Alistair Cooke, R.I.P.

Alistair Cooke was, in England, the best-known living American except for the president. That meant, during his career, excepting Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter—correction! Cooke was probably better known than Carter—Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and . . . Bush. He coexisted with all these chiefs of state over all those years in several capacities, most prominently as author of a weekly BBC "letter" in which he recounted what was going on in his adopted country with a poise and understanding unequaled by any other expatriate, and unsurpassed by any native-born observer. He called an end to his Letter from America in March; his last letter was Number 2,869. One commentator in London said that news of Cooke's ending his broadcasts to England was on the order of news that the Queen had died.

He did everything with that wry, amiable, but firm-handed assurance that made him the ideal host on large-scale television enterprises. He was master of ceremonies for *Masterpiece Theater*, and proved irreplaceable when he gave up that commission. His book on America was a startling bestseller. When published it sold out almost immediately, reaching #1 on the *New York Times*'s list. He was dismayed to learn that the intricately designed volume would take three months to reproduce in a second printing. Three months later it reappeared in the bookstores and leaped once more to the #1 spot.

My experience of his friendship was, if not unique, at least ever so unusual. The narrative of it goes back to 1974, when he reviewed one of my collections for the *Washington Post*. I was unsurprised by its acuity, but moved by its courtesy and indeed geniality. (AC was a political liberal.) I wrote to him and he proposed that we lunch, which we proceeded to do in what became a lunch every quarter for nearly 30 years. His copious memory and Scots background always supplied, at the end of lunch, the answer to the question, Is it your turn to pay the bill, or mine?

A few years ago the doctors told him he would need to stay home, so that our quarterly lunches became fortnightly glasses of wine, with his beautiful 90-year-old wife, the artist. These visits were at his apartment on the eleventh floor overlooking Central Park. Eight floors closer to the ground was the apartment of *New Yorker* legend William Shawn, who declined to visit at the penthouse because he was afraid of heights.

No visitor was ever afraid that conversation would flag, or that niches of American history or English literature would be ignored, let alone that listlessness would creep into the room. Cooke's animation was boundless, his pointed memory infinite. He remembered everything, including the history of the world and amusing encounters with kings and writers and his true heroes, the great golfers. He would sit, his head slightly bent, and observe his lifelong rule, which was to entertain and to charm and to inform.

He called me the week after he announced the end of his BBC program to give me a confidence. His doctor, after examining his lungs, had pronounced a death sentence. When that is told you by someone aged 95, expressions of hope are limited. What can one say, except to curse the necessary ending even of lives of such singular men, after so many years of enchanting the public and his friends? Nothing, beyond expressing quiet gratitude for the promise of eternal life in the hereafter.

—WFB

We met, as we habitually did, on the Monday afternoon, at 6. He was seated in the usual chair, in a dressing gown, and didn't take my hand—"Nobody is permitted to touch me! Infection, they say." And he was off, touching in the hour on a hundred points of interest, if not of concern, including the career of the German whose King Lear he had so much admired, and who had fled Hitler for America, ending his career playing butler parts in Hollywood. "I received yesterday," Cooke said, an impish grin on his face, "a letter from Churchill College in Cambridge. It read, 'Mr. Cooke, now that you have ended your BBC broadcasts, you will have time to relax and put your feet on the desk. This will, we hope, give you time to act as a trustee of Churchill College.'" He laughed. "I wrote back: 'Thank you for your invitation. In about two months, I will put my feet up on the desk permanently.'" Cooke thought this very funny, which indeed it was, very nearly, though not quite, dispelling the gloom in his visitor's heart. His animation was at par, and I told him goodnight and said I'd be with him the following Monday.

That next Monday—yesterday—I called and learned that he was not feeling well; I'd best postpone my visit. This morning the news came to me that he had died at midnight. I called his secretary, who I knew from prolonged contact was so intelligently and affectionately involved in his life. She told me that on reading my covering letter, he had instructed her to reinsert my obituary into the envelope: He declined to read it.

He would certainly have corrected my mistaken reference to him as a Scotsman—he was raised in Manchester. And he might have suggested that I give the name of the beautiful lady he was married to, Jane White Hawkes. His declining a look at the obituary was understandable, though I regret he did not have from me this record of my affection and admiration for him.

—WFB

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all these ifs, al-Qaeda would never have become the menace it has become."

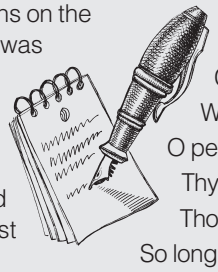
The White House has taken almost as much heat for fighting back against Clarke as it has for the substance of his allegations. Administration officials clearly felt that Clarke's charges were deeply unfair, which they are, and thought that they had no option but to take him on aggressively. There was a cost to this. The impulse to defend Bush's record kept officials from acknowledging forthrightly that they, like their predecessors, had underestimated the terrorist threat prior to 9/11. Their counterarguments sometimes appeared at odds—Cheney said Clarke was not "in the loop on a lot of this," while Rice said he was. (The confusing truth is that he was a little of both—less influential than he had been in the Clinton administration, but still an important player.) By fighting hand-to-hand with Clarke, the White House inevitably lost some of its prestige. The gravity of Clarke's allegations and the sympathetic play given them in the media, however, gave the White House little choice but to push back. The administration's actions were clearly not driven wholly by political considerations: It took a beating for insisting for days, on separation-of-powers grounds, that Condoleezza Rice could not testify before the 9/11 commission in public.

How will the Clarke controversy play over the long term? Bush's advantage is that few people genuinely believe he is weak on terror. The most important question in the campaign will be who can best prosecute the war going forward. To win that argument, Bush need only stand his ground. Defend the idea that the War on Terror is indeed a war. Preserve the Patriot Act. Stand by the distinction between enemy combatants and normal criminal defendants. Persevere in Iraq. Repeat as necessary.

notes & asides

■ Dear Bill: Just read your piece on Westbrook Pegler in *The New Yorker*. Lovely. I got to know Peg by correspondence in the 1950s, and spent a weekend at his home in Arizona somewhere along the line. We sat out by the swimming pool, sipping on cool libations, and talking mainly of politics and baseball. Maude listened as patiently as an old cat with lively kittens. Now, now, boys! Now and then he would cast off robe and towel and stride majestically into the briny deep. Thus Poseidon explored the waves. I have seen cows wallow. Impressive.

When La Boca [La Boca Grande—the Big Mouth—Mrs. Roosevelt] died I telephoned Peg and asked him to write an obituary piece for me. I was then editor of the *Richmond News Leader*. He promptly obliged. It was vintage Pegler. Gorgeous! I had the copy set in type and took a proof upstairs to publisher Tennant Bryan. I thought it was one helluva coup—Westbrook Pegler on Eleanor Roosevelt! You may remember that Tennant was a real Southern gentleman. He was appalled at the thought of casting aspersions on the dead lady and ordered me to kill the piece. There was nothing I could do but apologize to Peg and tell him to keep the hundred bucks I had sent him.



He could be hilarious when the devil was really in him. I remember one column he wrote in which Frankfurter was the home-plate umpire and the runners ran their bases backward. They just don't make them like that no more.

Regards all around,
Jack
[James Jackson Kilpatrick]
Washington, D. C.

Dear Jack: How wonderful what happened, and your recall of it. I wish I had access to that obituary. Thanks for writing.

As ever affectionately,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: With the help of John Keats and Wallace Stevens, I have attempted to fulfill Mr. Schmitt's wish (Sept. 29) for an ode to peanut butter. I hope it lives up to his expectation and yours and that it sustains him in his octogenarian years:

Ode to Peanut Butter

Thou still unravish'd jar of peanut butter,
Thou foster child of nourishing taste,
Paragon of snacks, a crime to waste.
Only in reverence thy name we utter.
What peanut farm legend haunts about thy shape?
Thy substance gathered by sylvan maids
In dreams of Tempe or the dales of Arcady
Who in labors and mad pursuit can ne'er escape.
O static shape that lures the eye with symmetry,
O fair attitude that leads our spreader to the mix,
What expectation, what rare prolepsis, what unbridled glee,
To gently spread on biscuit or bread thy texture smooth.
Though among the untutored, the unpure of heart,
Some would savor thee in a state of chunky.
Cast out that blackguard, that sullied tart
Who would thy flawless texture render funky.
O peanut butter jar, like that in Tennessee
Thy looks, thy shape, thy taste so pure,
Thou wilt take dominion everywhere
So long as civilized tastes endure.

Yours sincerely,
James M. La Sala
Cheshire, Conn.

Dear Mr. La Sala: Nice going! Can you do one for watermelon?

Cordially,

—WFB

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■ AT WAR ■

Fatal Visions

One is pre-9/11, the other is post-. Which will prevail?

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

THREE months before September 11, I was waiting nervously in my office at United Press International in Washington for a phone call or e-mail from "somewhere in Afghanistan." Journalistic boy wonder Arnaud de Borchgrave, about 75 years old at the time, was rattling over the Afghan hills on UPI's behalf towards a meeting with Osama bin Laden. If Arnaud returned with an interview (and he had known Osama since the terrorist was a boy) it would be another one of his world-beating scoops.

When Arnaud finally contacted us, he was crestfallen. He had got within 200 yards of Osama, who was himself willing to be interviewed. But the Taliban had, at the last moment, withdrawn its permission and made Arnaud turn back. He had done so—but with a very substantial consolation prize: an interview with the Taliban's leader, Mullah Omar, only the second he had ever given. This was, moreover, a terrific interview. Arnaud's sympathetic, non-hectoring technique ("Really? That's fascinating. How did you manage that?") had lured the mullah, like so many others, into dangerous frankness. It was an interview with a gathering storm.

Though our regular UPI clients were pleased, we couldn't sell it to the rest of the world, then preoccupied with falling dotcoms and rising recessions. The opinions of a fanatical Muslim fundamentalist in a faraway land of which we knew little was of no relevance whatsoever. On September 11, they discovered how wrong they had been. It is hard to convey the difference in the cultural and political atmospheres on either side of 9/11.

Before the attack on the Twin Towers, the common opinion of well-informed people (more on the liberal-progressive side than among conservatives) was that the world was moving into a different and higher phase of civilization. Geopolitics was being replaced by geoeconomics, "hard" military power by "soft" cultural power, and national sovereignty by new overlapping forms of "global governance." America's superpower "hegemony" might seem to contradict this half-utopian vision. But there was a confident expectation among international lawyers and U.N. officials that U.S. power could be constrained within these new transnational regulatory structures, or perhaps harnessed to support them.

It was in this atmosphere that the Clinton and early George W. Bush administrations developed their policies towards terrorism and al-Qaeda. From our post-9/11 vantage point, those policies now seem to overstress law enforcement in preference to a military response, to underestimate the terrorist threat, and to lack an adequate sense of urgency. But these errors cannot be blamed entirely on the government officials assigned to counter terrorism. They are exactly what you would expect in a cultural and political atmosphere in which neither the media nor the general public was interested in an interview with the leader of a government that was sheltering and assisting the terrorist group that had already bombed the World Trade Center and the USS *Cole*.

Indeed, in between his barbed criticisms of the Bush administration to the 9/11 committee hearings, Richard Clarke made two very candid and significant admissions: first, that the measures he himself proposed against al-Qaeda would not have prevented 9/11; and second, that he did not propose the harsher military measures that might have done so because they would not then have been politically acceptable. Seen in this light, the failure of both administrations in which Clarke was employed to prevent 9/11 was first and foremost a failure to alert American and world opinion to the seriousness of the terrorist threat and to prepare effective measures against it. Given that the Clinton administration was in power for eight years and the

OSAMA BIN LADEN BY ROMAN GENN

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Bush administration for eight months before 9/11, Clinton's failure is more serious than Bush's.

But the media, the foreign-policy establishment, the international community, and the general public all share in the blame. With the exception of a few far-sighted realists, we all lived in a fool's paradise. We were supposedly jolted out of this dream-like state by 9/11. Certainly, measures like the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq became politically thinkable and, indeed, doable. But they have not become the conventional wisdom. Their supporting ideas—national sovereignty, military power, American preeminence, and the right of preemptive war in certain circumstances—remain controversial. For some, even illegitimate. And those who believed in a new order of post-national global governance never accepted that 9/11 represented a defeat for either their wider vision or their non-military solutions to terror. They saw 9/11 as a temporary obstacle to their ultimate triumph.

As a result, two visions of global order now compete; two cultural atmospheres mingle uncomfortably with each other; two sets of arguments are now available for polemical usage. In the 9/11 hearings and media commentary on it, this has presented a slight cognitive difficulty for the media, the Democrats, and the Left's foreign-policy leaders. Overwhelmingly, they sympathize with the pre-9/11 vision of global governance and thus with the "softer" policies towards terrorism that prevailed during the 1990s and until September 2001. For partisan reasons, however, they desperately want to condemn the Bush administration for negligence. Most of the time, therefore, they judge its actions by the harder criteria of what has been politically possible since 9/11. And their task has been made easier by the overly defensive mode adopted by the Bush administration towards these attacks. It behaves as if it is hiding something. What it is hiding, however, is that it continued to follow the conventional "soft" anti-terrorism policies of its predecessor administration and current critics.

That has created short-term PR difficulties for the Bush administration. But its media and political critics are ultimately likely to be caught in a much more fundamental and dangerous contradiction. For, despite their desire to sound tough and realistic on terror, their ideological predisposition towards softer policies keeps popping out of their trousers in the most embarrassing fashion. Clarke's apology was such a moment of unintended cultural flashing. The politics of apology belong clearly to the pre-9/11 political atmosphere—the brief tradition of Tony Blair apologizing for the Irish potato famine, Christian leaders for the Crusades, and Bill Clinton for slavery. In all these cases, those offering the apology are not admitting any personal wrongdoing. They are seeking moral credit for accusing other people of wrongdoing. If the *New York Times* really thought that Clarke was responsible for 9/11, it would not be lionizing him. Its gushing is explained by the fact that Clarke's apology was an argument in disguise that served to transfer the blame for 9/11 from Osama bin Laden to George W. Bush. Terrorism was just a natural force, like an avalanche; the real crime was our (i.e., Bush's) failure to take prudent measures against it.

It is Iraq, however, where the cultural clash is most dangerous to the Left. Clarke's dark hints that Bush was diverted from fighting al-Qaeda by his obsessive interest in Saddam Hussein is fatuous. The U.S. invaded and conquered Afghanistan, drove the Taliban from power, broke up the terrorist training camps, set Osama on his underground travels, and arrested al-Qaeda operatives around the globe—all before invading Iraq. But Clarke's suspicions play to two powerful emotions on the American and international left: the belief that "Bush Lied," and the conviction that the U.S. is an imperialist obstacle to the better world order. When U.N. officials in Geneva or NGO operatives in Upper Volta believe these myths, they represent a serious but not crucial international problem. But when such emotions become the conventional wisdom of Democratic primary voters—when both American cultural elites and the lumpenintelligentsia adopt the inverted patriotism of Archie Bunker's son-in-law, to whom the Other is always the Better—then they are a serious political problem. But not one for President Bush's re-election team. **NR**

■ THE MIDDLE EAST

A Sheikh's Death

The meaning of a 'targeted assassination'

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

THE life and death of Sheikh Yassin is a cautionary tale about politics and values in the Arab and Muslim Middle East. On the surface he appeared to be a man of religion, humble and modest, fit to be described as a "spiritual leader" as though he were some Palestinian Martin Luther King. In the midst of a society of unrestrained corruption and injustice, it is true, he lived frugally with his wife and eleven children in Gaza. Suffering from several severe disabilities, he was in a wheelchair all his adult life.

At a great remove from these outward appearances, he was the founder and organizer of Hamas, a straightforward terrorist group whose avowed objective is the destruction of Israel. To that end he devised the strategy of suicide bombing, and recruited young bombers. He wanted to kill Jews so badly that he didn't mind how many Muslims died in the process. Islam explicitly condemns suicide as sinful, but he threw over it the false cloak of religious martyrdom. Yassin and Hamas are responsible for hundreds of attacks, including 52 suicide bombings by young men and a few young women, killing at least 400 Israelis and wounding over 2,000 more. The latest Hamas attack in the port of Ashdod aimed to explode chemical storage tanks, an act of potential mass-murder. In one of his last interviews Yassin predicted that Israel would collapse in 2007. He also liked to say that the day of his death would be the happiest of his life.

Mr. Pryce-Jones is an NR senior editor. Among his books is *The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs.*

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Courtyard entrance to the Forbidden City, Beijing.

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Professor Kenneth Hammond, Ph.D., was carefully selected to teach this course because of his outstanding abilities as a teacher and his accomplishments as a scholar. Professor Hammond is Associate Professor of History and Head of the History Department at New Mexico State University, where he has taught since receiving his doctorate in History and East Asian Languages from Harvard University in 1994. He studied and worked in Beijing from 1982-1987 and remains a frequent visitor. Professor Hammond specializes in the cultural and intellectual history of China in the late imperial era.

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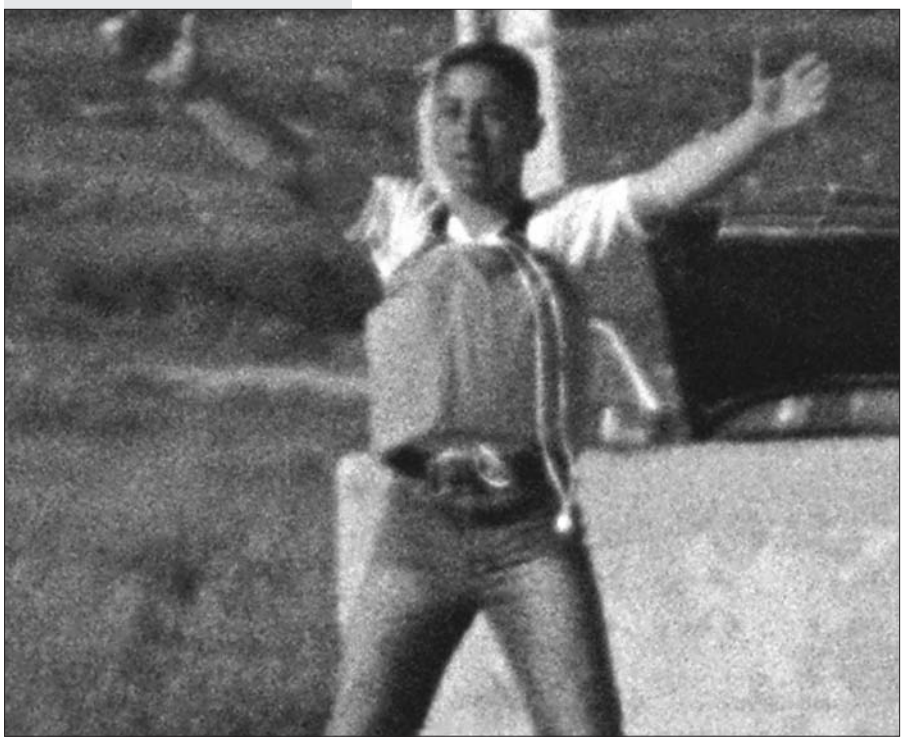
Yassin's career illustrates the frenetic emotional impetus that religion adds to an otherwise stagnant or blocked nationalist movement. Much about his background remains obscure. Some say that he attended a secular university in Cairo for a year; others that he sat in on classes in Al-Azhar, the thousand-year-old center of Sunni learning in Cairo. The title of *sheikh* denotes proper religious authority, but evidently in Yassin's case it is honorific, a present he gave himself. At any rate, in the course of a haphazard education, he fell under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Originating in Egypt in the 1920s when the British were the country's effective rulers, the Muslim Brotherhood held that the West was so decadent and vicious that it endangered the future of Islam. (Quite why Muslims should fall so easily for decadence and vice is never made clear.) Muslims had the duty of uniting and fighting for their faith against the West, more familiarly the Christians and the Jews; they were to do this by whatever means were at hand. This mindset is the foundation of Islamist terror: The ayatollahs of Iran, Osama bin Laden and Wahhabis in Saudi Arabia, Salafist groups in North Africa—all share it.

The Muslim Brotherhood soon established branches or offshoots, whether open or clandestine, all over the Arab and Muslim world, spreading further into Europe. Appealing to Islamic solidarity and purity, these branches were first and foremost a challenge to existing Muslim governments. Havoc, even civil war, has followed. Islamist gunmen have tried to kill every Egyptian president, succeeding in the case of Anwar Sadat. Over the years, Egyptian governments have met the challenge head-on, killing some thousands of Muslim Brothers and their associates. At least 1,000 were executed in the Nineties when President Hosni Mubarak decided to break the movement for good. The late President Hafiz Assad of Syria became a byword for brutality when he put down the local Muslim Brotherhood in a mass slaughter. Saddam Hussein and the Algerian military government killed Islamists on an even wider scale.

In the Eighties Sheikh Yassin toured Saudi Arabia and the Gulf in search of rich and like-minded backers and sponsors. He raised millions of dollars. Establishing himself and Hamas, he necessarily became a rival to Yasser Arafat, hitherto the undisputed proprietor of the Palestinian cause. They were in fact two of a kind, self-imposed and aspiring to absolute power by whatever means they judged helpful to that end. The sole difference was that Arafat claimed to be a nationalist incorporating Islamist purposes, while Yassin claimed to be an Islamist incorporating nationalist purposes. Both collected subsidies from compliant Arabs and Europeans, and used them to build up a clientele. According to the circumstances of the moment, the relationship between them veered from enmity and potential civil war to compromise and tacit alliance. In the habitual maneuvering of self-imposed Arab strongmen, these two masters of the black political arts threatened to unleash large-scale violence against each other while in practice finding excuses for not doing so. Between them, the two men have delayed the creation of the Palestinian state and triggered mass hysteria in their people. A petition just signed by 60 Palestinian intellectuals in favor of refraining from retaliation for Yassin's death is nothing less than an appeal for rationality.

A child of Sheikh Yassin (Nablus, March 24, 2004)



FLASH 90/REUTERS

At first, Israeli governments believed they were witnessing a genuine ideological split among Palestinians, and it was in their interest to allow this to develop freely. This is the sort of misappraisal typical of those who interpret Arab political processes through Western perspectives. In practice they found themselves facing two enemies who were mirror images of each other. Imitating Hamas, Arafat recruited his own youths in the Al-Aqsa Brigade to go out and blow themselves up. Israeli policymakers were at a loss. With immaculate symmetry, they sometimes appeared poised to arrest or kill Arafat, and sometimes to arrest or kill Yassin. Twice they put Yassin in prison, only to be caught in their own toils and obliged to release him. As for Arafat, they have him bottled up in the ruins of his headquarters in Ramallah, his authority draining into impotence, his sponsors now wary and his funds drying up. A recent poll by a reputable Palestinian research organization shows that just over half those surveyed no longer believe that Arafat and his Palestinian Authority have any effective existence and might just as well disappear.

In the unflinching logic of these absolute politics, a weakened Arafat entailed a strengthened Yassin. Given September 11 and the apparent triumphalism of Osama bin Laden, Yassin seems to have

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concluded that terror was indeed the decisive weapon the Muslim Brotherhood had always claimed it to be, and that his moment had come. Some evidence exists that Hamas has hopes of enrolling a Muslim International Brigade to fold the Palestinian Authority into a worldwide Islamist campaign of terror. British Muslims have already died for Hamas.

All Israeli governments have naturally done what they could to protect their citizens and punish the perpetrators of terror. The Sharon government is trying out the novelty of physically isolating Israel from the Palestinians. The fence along the West Bank is one effective measure separating the two peoples, and the proposed withdrawal from Israeli settlements in Gaza is another. Withdrawing shortly before the failed Camp David talks from the enclave occupied in southern Lebanon since 1982, then-Prime Minister Ehud Barak gave the impression that Israel was on the run, and under military pressure or terror could be made to run further. To pull out of Gaza carries the same risk: that Israel is perceived to be acting out of weakness. It would also have opened a political vacuum for Yassin to fill. As many as three contenders have come forward to replace him, but none has his credentials or authority.

On the day when Israeli helicopters were targeting Yassin, Pakistani forces with attached American and British specialists were closing in on al-Qaeda diehards in a fortress in remote Waziristan, along the Afghan border. Spokesmen hinted that a top al-Qaeda leader might have been trapped there (which proved not the case). President Bush has often declared that he wants such people taken dead or alive. The same goes for Yassin. Deserving pity as a handicapped man in a wheelchair, he nonetheless forfeited mercy by organizing and campaigning to kill, glorying in the blood that others shed on his behalf. By definition, such a man is not a spiritual leader but a terrorist deliberately placing himself beyond the law. We know a murderer when we see one. Self-defense carries its own justification, and in this instance brings a measure of consolation as well. Just as the toppling of Saddam Hussein saved the lives of many Iraqis, so the death of Yassin saves the lives of Palestinians and Israelis who would otherwise have been his certain victims. **NR**

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■ ASIA

Trouble in Taiwan

A messy election warns of a dark future

ROSS H. MUNRO

TAIWAN's bitterly fought presidential election in March and its even more bitter aftermath have provided the United States with a daunting glimpse of what could go wrong on the democratic island off China's east coast. The post-election turmoil demonstrated that the potential for political instability there is much greater than previously thought. That's good news for Beijing—which will exploit any opportunity to realize its ambition of conquering the island—and bad news for the United States, Taiwan's best friend and sole military ally (if only de facto).

President Chen Shui-bian's re-election campaign was marked by a defiant stance toward China and an emotional appeal to the separate Taiwanese identity that has flowered since Taiwan's first democratic election more than a decade ago. Nevertheless, even his close supporters privately concede that he was headed for decisive defeat at the hands of the Nationalist party (Kuomintang or KMT) candidate, Lien Chan, until the eve of the election, when Chen gained public sympathy after being slightly wounded in a shooting incident.

Lien and his running mate, James Soong, were suspicious about the shooting and infuriated by Chen's suggestions that the KMT was disloyal to Taiwan. Those things, combined with Chen's narrow victory margin of 29,000 votes, were the sparks that set off the post-election fires. The KMT demanded the election be annulled and appeared ready to call for Chen's violent overthrow. For days, Taiwan's fledgling democracy itself seemed in jeopardy.

Even more worrisome was Beijing's reaction. China's Taiwan Affairs Office warned, "We will not sit back and look on unconcerned should the post-election situation in Taiwan get out of control, leading to social turmoil, endangering the lives and property of Taiwan compatriots, and affecting stability across the Taiwan Straits."

That warning should haunt the people of Taiwan—and all those concerned with their fate—for years to come. Beijing wasn't signaling its intention to do anything serious right away. Rather, it was issuing a reminder for the future that it has long asserted a unilateral right to invade and conquer Taiwan in the event of serious disorder.

What's troubling about Beijing's threat is that a Chinese military strike against a politically embroiled Taiwan seems much more plausible, and more likely to succeed, than the other China–Taiwan military scenarios analyzed by experts for more than a decade. After Beijing adopted its ambitious Grand Strategy in the early 1990s, aimed at achieving unchallenged Chinese domination over all of East Asia, Chinese military strategists frequently argued that seizing Taiwan was an essential first step. Since then, China has focused on achieving the military capabilities to conquer Taiwan in several different ways:

Conventional invasion. Although China openly advertised some major military exercises in the mid-1990s as rehearsals for a massive, coordinated invasion of Taiwan by air, sea, and amphibious units, experts agree that it could take decades for China to acquire sufficient capabilities to pull this off.

Blockade. Blockading Taiwan by air and sea could bring the island to its knees—but only if the U.S. Navy and Air Force don't intervene. China is trying to develop military capabilities to deter the United States in such a scenario, but at best success here is many years away.

Missile barrage. As China deploys hundreds of missiles on its coast opposite Taiwan, analysts worry increasingly about a sudden, massive missile barrage aimed at destroying Taiwan's key military assets and decapitating its political and military leadership. This is militarily plausible but the international reaction would ensure the collapse of China's export-based economy and with it, perhaps, its one-party dictatorship.

But what if China a few years from now launched a "humanitarian intervention" with the announced aim of restoring order in a Taiwan wracked by political chaos? That was effectively what it threatened to do in its March 26 warning.

It wouldn't require a large-scale military operation to permanently undermine the Taiwanese government, and discredit the U.S. commitment to aid Taiwan in the event of a Chinese attack. One can envision a near-future scenario in which Chinese special-forces units, landing by parachute and in helicopters, seize an airfield, port, or even a military base. The chosen site is "defended" by senior Taiwanese military officers who were born into mainlander families and are deeply uncomfortable with the shift in power to those who identify with an independent Taiwan. Recruited by Beijing agents appealing to their Chinese patriotism, they have agreed in advance to offer no resistance for several hours. Later they will retire to comfortable lives and respected positions on the mainland, or remain in Taiwan and plausibly insist that Chinese information warfare had cut off their communications with Taipei during the attack.

Imagine as well that the Chinese operation begins at 11 P.M., Washington time. Just as the American president is being awakened with the first, confusing indications of a small military operation, Beijing sends the White House an urgent but vague message advising the president that it has merely sent one or two small units into troubled locales to restore order. The units, China's leader avers, will leave Taiwan and return to China within a few days.

And, in fact, China keeps its promise and the units depart. But in their wake is the failure of the Taiwanese government to repel the invasion, the failure of Taiwan's armed forces to crush the Chinese units, and the failure of the U.S. government to come to Taiwan's aid before the Chinese units departed. Such a combined failure might collapse the entire Taiwanese governing structure. With Beijing asserting

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that it won't hesitate to dispatch troops to Taiwan again and with the credibility of U.S. military assurances to Taiwan in doubt, Beijing could soon set up a quisling government in Taipei willing to bow to its demands.

The Center for Security Policy's Richard D. Fisher Jr., possibly the best U.S. expert outside the government on Chinese military capabilities, recently presented a paper detailing China's development of military assets that could soon accomplish precisely this sort of operation. China's Taiwan Leading Group has been tasked with coordinating a multifaceted military, political, and economic effort to take control of Taiwan. And China is pouring resources into developing and strengthening its special forces, including airborne special forces, which could soon be able to launch raids against targets on the island.

Moreover, this scenario must seem increasingly appealing to Beijing now that its "Hong Kong demonstration project" has so obviously failed. Before and after China's 1997 takeover of Hong Kong, most mainstream China-watchers glibly and confidently predicted that China would keep its promise to allow the people of Hong Kong substantial autonomy in governing themselves. Beijing, they argued, wanted Hong Kong to serve as an example to the people of Taiwan that they had nothing to fear from the "one country, two systems" formula under which Hong Kong had become part of China.

But on March 26, after Taiwan's election, Beijing issued a statement that expressed its contempt for the commitments it had made to give the people of Hong Kong wide-ranging autonomy: Beijing effectively declared that it would dictate any and all political changes to be made in Hong Kong's internal governing structure.

If this statement had been issued before Taiwan's March 20 election, Chen Shuibian would have pounced on it as conclusive evidence that Taiwan must keep its distance from a perfidious China. As I write, Hong Kongers are in a state of shock or sadness, depending on whether they had ever believed Beijing. More to the point, the people of Taiwan are absorbing the lesson that they alone must guard their (de facto) independence, no matter how closely their economy becomes integrated with the mainland's.

But such self-reliance will require a political transformation in Taiwan. A new consensus must be created that recognizes that unchecked political conflict—not to mention political turmoil—can open the gates to Taiwan's destruction. That consensus should reject the sort of China-baiting that Chen engaged in during the election campaign—no matter how justified it may seem. It must exclude those elements of the KMT whose political stance places unification with the mainland before democracy. And it must assign harsh penalties for fomenting or engaging in political disturbances that could give China the excuse it seeks to attack the democratic island.

Finally, the United States should make it clear to Taiwan's leaders and its people that its commitment to defend Taiwan is not absolute. Some American conservatives insist that the United States has a moral obligation to support any decision the people of Taiwan make about their future, even if that decision is to declare an independent republic, a step China promises it would counter with military aggression. But that would effectively cede to Taiwan the power to declare war for the United States.

The U.S. should continue the effort started by President Bush last December to warn Taiwan against unnecessarily drawing us into a war. Taiwan—our old friend, our fellow democracy, and a crucial part of the balance of power in East Asia—is worth defending even if it means going to war. But not if Taiwan starts it. **NR**

KIN CHEUNG/REUTERS

KMT supporters in Taipei

■ THE OPEN QUESTION

NR on Stem Cells

THE MAGAZINE IS WRONG

JEFFREY HART

NATIONAL REVIEW has consistently taken a position on stem-cell research that requires some discussion here. Three editorials early this year were based on the assertion that a single fertilized cell is a "human being." This premise—and the conclusions drawn from it—require challenge on conservative grounds, as they have never been approved by American law or accepted as common convention.

The first 2004 editorial appeared in the January 26 issue, and made a series of assertions about recent legislation in New Jersey. It included the notion that it is now "possible" to create a human embryo there—through cloning—that, at age eight months, could be sold for research. But this dystopian fantasy could become fact in no American jurisdiction.

In the March 8 NR we read another editorial; this one achieved greater seriousness. Still, it called for a "new law" that "would say that human beings, however small and young, may not be treated instrumentally and may not be deliberately destroyed."

In all of the editorials, we are asked to accept the insistent dogma that a single fertilized cell is a "human being, however small and young," and is not to be "deliberately destroyed."

This demand grates—because such "human beings" are deliberately destroyed all the time, and such "mass homicide" arouses no public outcry. In fact, there are about 100,000 fertilized

The Open Question is a forum in which an NR senior editor may dissent from an editorial position of the magazine.

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cells now frozen in maternity clinics. These are the inevitable, and so deliberate, by-products of in vitro fertilization, accepted by women who cannot conceive children naturally. No wonder there has been no outcry: Where reality shows medical waste that would otherwise lie useless, NR's characterization of these frozen embryos as "small and young" makes one think of the Gerber baby.

The entire NR case against stem-cell research rests, like a great inverted pyramid, on the single assertion that these cells are "human beings"—a claim that is not self-evidently true. Even when the naked eye is aided by a microscope, these cells—"zygotes," to use the proper terminology—do not look like human beings. That resemblance does not emerge even as the zygote grows into the hundred-cell organism, about the size of a pinhead, called a "blastocyst." This is the level of development at which stem cells are produced: The researcher is not interested in larger embryos, much less full-blown, for-sale fetuses.

I myself have never met anyone who bites into an apple, gazes upon the seeds there, and sees a grove of apple trees. I think we must conclude, if we are to use language precisely, that the single fertilized cell is a *developing* or *potential* human being—many of which are destroyed during in vitro fertilization, and even in the course of natural fertilization. But just as a seed—a *potential* apple tree—is no orchard, a *potential* child is not yet a human being.

There is more to this matter than biology: In question is NR's very theory of—and approach to—politics. Classic and valuable arguments in this magazine have often taken the form of Idea (or paradigm) versus Actuality. Here are a few such debates that have shaped the magazine, a point of interest especially to new readers.

Very early in NR's history, the demand for indisputably conservative candidates gave way to William F. Buckley Jr.'s decisive formulation that NR should prefer "the most conservative electable candidate." WFB thus corrected his refusal to vote for Eisenhower, who was at least more conservative than Stevenson. Senior editor James Burnham, a realist, also voted for Ike; in his decision, Actuality won out.

In the 1956 crisis in Hungary, Burnham's profoundly held Idea about the necessity for Liberation in Europe contrasted with Eisenhower's refusal, based on Actuality, to intervene in a landlocked nation where Soviet ground and air superiority was decisive. But later on, Burnham, choosing Actuality over the Idea, saw much sooner than most conservatives that Nixon's containment and "Vietnamization" could not work in South Vietnam, which was a sieve. The "peace" that was "at hand" in 1972 was the peace of the grave.

A final example: In the late 1960s, senior editor Brent Bozell's theoretical demand for perfect Catholic morality—argued in a very fine exchange with another senior editor, Frank Meyer—was rejected by NR.

The prospect of eliminating horrible, disabling ailments justifies, morally, using cells that are otherwise doomed.

Thus the tension between Idea and Actuality has a long tradition at NR, revived by this question of stem cells. Ultimately, American constitutional decision-making rests upon the "deliberate consent" of a self-governing people. Such decision-making by consensus usually accords no participant everything he desires, and thus is non-utopian. Just try an absolute, ideological ban on in vitro fertilization, for example, and observe the public response.

In fact, an editorial (NR, August 6, 2001) has held that even in vitro fertilization is hard to justify morally. Understandably, NR has soft-pedaled this opinion: The magazine's view that a single cell is a "human being" has never been expressed in or embraced by American law. It represents an absolutization of the "human being" claim for a single cell. It stands in contradiction to the "deliberate sense" theory NR has heretofore espoused. And, at this very moment, it is being contradicted in the Actual world of research practice.

Recently, for instance, a Harvard researcher produced 17 stem-cell "lines" from the aforementioned leftover frozen cells. The researcher's goal is not homicide, of course, but the possible cure of dreadful diseases. It seems to me that the prospect of eliminating horrible, disabling ailments justifies, morally, using cells that are otherwise doomed. Morality requires the weighing of results, and the claim to a "right to life" applies in both directions. Those lifting that phrase from the Declaration of Independence do not often add "liberty and the pursuit of happiness," there given equal standing as "rights"—rights that might be more widely enjoyed in the wake of stem-cell advances.

As I said earlier, the evolution of NR as a magazine that matters has involved continuing arguments between Idea and Actuality. Here, the Idea that a single fertilized cell is a human being, and that destroying one is a homicide, is not sustainable. That is the basis—the only basis—for NR's position thus far on stem-cell research. Therefore NR's position on the whole issue is unsustainable.

Buckley has defined conservatism as the "politics of reality." That is the strength of conservatism, a Burkean strength, and an anti-utopian one. I have never heard a single cytologist affirming the proposition that a single cell is a "human being"; here, Actuality will prevail, as usual.

In recommending against federal funding for most stem-cell research, President Bush stated that 60 lines of stem cells that already exist are adequate for current research. The National Institutes of Health has said that this is incorrect. There are in fact 15 lines, and these are not adequate even for current research. The president was misinformed. But Actuality is gaining ground nonetheless: Harvard University has recently announced the formation of a $100 million Harvard Stem Cell Institute. And Harvard physicians are conducting community-education programs to counter misinformation (Reuters, March 3): "Scientists at Harvard University announced on Wednesday that they had created 17 batches of stem cells from human embryos in defiance of efforts by President Bush to limit such research. 'What we have done is to make use of previously frozen human fertilized

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eggs that otherwise were going to be discarded,' [Dr. Douglas] Melton told reporters in a telephone briefing."

Not unexpectedly, and after losing one of its top scientists in the field to Cambridge (England), the University of California, Berkeley, announced that it was pursuing stem-cell research. Other UCs also made such announcements, and California state funding has been promised. It is easy to see that major research universities across the nation—and in any nation that can afford them—will either follow or lose their top scientists in this field. Experience shows that it is folly to reject medical investigation, a folly the universities and private-sector researchers will be sure to avoid.

Weak in theory, and irrelevant in practice, opposition to stem-cell research is now an irrelevance across the board; on this matter, even the president has made himself irrelevant. All this was to be expected: The only surprise has been the speed with which American research is going forward. It is pleasant to have the private sector intervene, as at Harvard, not to mention the initiatives of the states. In practical terms, this argument is over. NATIONAL REVIEW should not make itself irrelevant by trying to continue it.

THE MAGAZINE IS RIGHT

RAMESH PONNURU

NATIONAL REVIEW does not oppose stem-cell research. It approves of research on stem cells taken from adult somatic cells, or from umbilical cords. It opposes stem-cell research only when obtaining those cells destroys embryonic human beings, whether these beings are created through cloning, in vitro fertilization, or the old-fashioned way. Jeff Hart challenges NR's stance for three reasons: He disputes the idea that single-celled human embryos are human beings, he questions the prudence of advancing that idea, and he thinks the humanitarian goal of the research justifies the means.

Professor Hart starts his argument by noting that American law has never treated the single-celled embryo as a human being. This is true. But it never treated it as anything else, either. What would American law have had to say about the embryo in 1826, or, for that matter, in 1952?

The single-celled human embryo is neither dead nor inanimate. It is a living organism, not a functional part of another organism, and it directs its own development, according to its genetic template, through the embryonic, fetal, infant, and subsequent stages of development. (The terms "blastocyst," "adolescent," and "newborn" denote stages of development in a being of the same type, not different types of beings.) It is a *Homo sapiens*, not a member of some other species—which is why it is valuable to scientists in the first place.

From our Catalogue

What is Political Science?

The abiding problem of politics is ordering the conditions of life in a humanly satisfying way through the creation of objectively effective and subjectively meaningful institutions. Political order is constituted by symbols which represent what is conceived as the truth about the world and our nature as a part within it. The substance of political existence is psyche and hence the discourse that arises from it will always be hermeneutic. Political society is the space we create as historical beings through spiritual freedom. In political existence, institutions replace instinct and meaning replaces need. Political activity is a human vocation common to all. It cannot be avoided and must be responded to. It is the weakness of modern political consciousness to think that we can be so transformed as to be delivered from history while acting in history, and from political concerns while living in political society, or that the desperate modern situation renders political activity worthless. Mature political wisdom knows that neither history nor fate can be bypassed.

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Strictly speaking, it is not even an "it": It has a sex.

"Even when the naked eye is aided by a microscope," writes Professor Hart, early embryos "do not look like human beings." Actually, they look *exactly* like human beings—the way human beings look at that particular stage of development. We all looked like that, at that age. Professor Hart believes that science can open up whole worlds of knowledge and possibility to us. He should be willing to entertain the possibility that among the insights we have gained is the revelation that human beings at their beginnings look like nothing we have ever seen before.

Professor Hart notes that many embryos die naturally. And so? Infant mortality rates have been very high in some societies; old people die all the time. That does not mean it is permissible to kill infants or old people.

I should also comment about the New Jersey law that makes it legally possible to create a human embryo through cloning, develop it through the fetal stage, and sell it for research purposes at eight months. Professor Hart writes that "this dystopian fantasy could become fact in no American jurisdiction." Sadly, this is untrue: In most American jurisdictions, no law on the books would prevent this scenario from taking place.

In the past, scientists have been quite interested in doing research on aborted fetuses. Right now, the early embryo is a hotter research subject. But neither Professor Hart nor I can rule out the possibility that research on cloned fetuses will be thought, in a few years, to hold great promise. If scientists want to conduct such research, the only legal obstacles will be the statutes of those states that have banned human cloning—the very laws that NR favors. New Jersey has brought this dystopia one step closer.

It would be possible for Professor Hart to concede that the history of a body begins with its conception—that we were all once one-celled organisms, in the sense that "we" were never a sperm cell and an egg cell—while still claiming that it would have been morally defensible to destroy us at that time. Our intrinsic moral worth came later, he might argue: when we developed sentience, abstract reasoning, relationships with others, or some other distinguishing attribute. According to this viewpoint, human beings as such have no intrinsic right to life; many human beings enjoy that right only by virtue of qualities they happen to possess.

The implications of this theory, however, extend beyond the womb. Infants typically lack the immediately exercisable capacity for abstract mental reasoning, too—which is how Peter Singer and others have justified infanticide. It is impossible to identify a non-arbitrary point at which there is "enough" sentience or meaningful interaction to confer a right to life. It is also impossible to explain why some people do not have basic rights more or less than other people depending on how much of the accidental quality they possess. In other words, the foundation of human equality is destroyed as soon as we suggest that private actors may treat some members of the human species as though they were mere things. The claim in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal" becomes a self-evident lie.

Life comes before liberty and the pursuit of happiness in that declaration, and at no point is it suggested that liberty includes a right to kill, or that happiness may be pursued through homicide. Morality often "requires the weighing of results," as Professor Hart writes. But we would not kill one five-year-old child for the certain prospect of curing cancer, let alone the mere possibility—because the act would be intrinsically immoral. Or would we? Professor Hart writes that it is "folly to reject medical investigation." So much for restrictions on human experimentation.

Apple seeds are not a grove of trees. An infant is not an adult, either, just a potential adult, but that doesn't mean you can kill it. Professor Hart objects to the use of the words "young" and "small" to characterize the entities whose destruction we are debating. Since the argument for terminating them turns precisely on their having 100 cells or fewer (they're small), and on their not yet having advanced to later stages of human development (they're young), it's hard to see his point.

Apple seeds are not a grove of trees. An infant is not an adult, either, just a potential adult, but that doesn't mean you can kill it.

Let me turn now to the question of the politics of Actuality. NR is, in principle, against the intentional destruction of human embryos. But we have been quite mindful of political circumstances. As Professor Hart notes, we have not said much about regulating the practices of fertility clinics. (He faults us for both running wild with ideas and prudently declining to do so; also, freezing something is not the same as destroying it.) Prudence has kept us from urging the president to fight for a ban on all research that destroys human embryos. We have principally asked for two things: a ban on governmental funding of such research, and a ban on human cloning—even suggesting a simple moratorium on cloning as a compromise. We are not calling, to pursue one of Professor Hart's analogies, for an invasion of Hungary here. But neither are we suggesting that we are indifferent to the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe.

Our position on cloning is not that of some political fringe: It is the position of President Bush. It is the position of the House of Representatives, which has twice voted to ban human cloning. It is a position that, depending on the wording of the poll question, somewhere between one-third and two-thirds of the public shares. It is the position of the governments of Canada and Germany. NR has fought lonelier battles.

We are sometimes told that, in a pluralistic society in which many people have different views about such matters as the moral status of the human embryo, we cannot impose public policies that assume the correctness of some views over others. I cannot agree. Some people will not accept the justice of a ban on cloning for research; few policies command the full assent of all people of good will. But disagreement about the requirements of justice is no excuse for failing to do it. **NR**

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Twisted Words and Phrases (1)

How Arab propaganda has managed to give new meaning to old words.

In the decades of the Arabs' unremitting struggle to fight the Jews to the death and to wipe Israel off the map, they have managed to introduce certain words and phrases into the consciousness of the world. These phrases are twisted and have in many cases come to convey the exact opposite of their actual meaning. Today, we examine two of those twisted concepts.

Terrorists and Freedom Fighters

The Palestinians who blow themselves up and in so doing, succeed in killing and maiming as many innocent Jews as possible are described as "martyrs" and "freedom fighters" in the Arab world and even in much of the European press. But, for whatever purpose, the deliberate murder and mutilation of defenseless and innocent civilians can never be warranted by the common law of humanity and by accepted international standards of behavior and international law, even where the use of insurgent force may be understandable and even justified.

And, surely, there must be great doubt whether the insurgence of the Palestinians is justified at all. They have rejected all offers to settle their conflict and alleged grievances against Israel. The goal of the Palestinians is not to live peacefully and successfully alongside Israel, but rather to build a Muslim-Arab state on the charred ruins of a dismembered Israel.

> "There can really be no peace with people who….encourage their children to blow themselves up in order to kill or to maim as many as possible of those who oppose their twisted ideas of religion and of patriotism."

The official website of the PNA (Palestinian National Authority) does not show two states, only one—Israel is eliminated altogether. Palestinian "insurgents," who resort to terrorism and slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians will never acknowledge that a Jewish state, of any size and wherever located, has any right to exist. They will fight to the death and use any method and any weapon available to them to achieve their extremist and unattainable goals.

Those who murder and maim innocent civilians in pursuit of their genocidal ends are not "martyrs" nor "freedom fighters," nor even "militants" (as even the U.S. press often calls them). They are common mass murderers and terrorists, just as much as those who, for their own twisted reasons, committed the September 11 atrocities, and who deserve the condemnation of all decent mankind.

Dishonor in the Muslim World

The subjugation of women in all Islamic countries is placidly accepted by most of the world. The most widespread of these abominations is that of female genital mutilation, a practice that invades the rights of women and their enjoyment of life in the most horrible way.

Another act of disgraceful repression of women in the Muslim world is the "protection of family honor." Under this concept, a woman who, for any reason at all—including having been raped—is suspected of being or having been involved with a man who is not her husband, is condemned to death, usually by stoning. The primary purpose of that savagery is to salvage what is considered the "family honor."

"Honor killings" claim tens of thousands of female lives every year throughout the Muslim countries of the Middle East and Africa. Nobody seems to care. There is no record that the U. N. or any other international body has done anything to interfere with those horrible practices.

Leave it to the talent for genocidal innovation of Hamas, the Palestinian terrorist organization, to have added a new macabre twist to this barbaric custom. In January, a woman named Ream Selah el-Rayashi blew herself up at the Erez checkpoint, the main passage between Gaza and Israel. The woman, mother of two children, had committed the grave offense of falling in love with a man other than her husband. When the affair was discovered, el-Rayashi was given the choice between a dishonorable death by stoning at the hands of her family or an honorable state of martyrdom by becoming a suicide bomber. She chose self-inflicted death and the murder and maiming of many innocent Jews, before dishonor. It is not surprising that no similar demands were made on el-Rayashi's lover.

There can really be no peace with people whose beliefs are so different from Western concepts. There can be no peace with people who treat their women worse than cattle, kill them to save their "honor," and who mutilate them horribly in order to keep them sexually subjugated. And there can be no peace with people who, in the name of and for the purported glory of God, blow themselves up or encourage their children to blow themselves up in order to kill or to maim as many as possible of those whom they consider their mortal enemies and who oppose their twisted ideas of religion and patriotism.

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the new COLOSSUS

Wal-Mart is America's store, and the world's, and its enemies are sadly behind

JAY NORDLINGER

WHO'S the biggest, baddest company of them all? Wal-Mart, of course, leader of the *Fortune* 500 list and the largest employer in America (next to the government, that is). Wal-Mart is also the largest employer in Mexico (again, next to the government). The company has 1.4 million employees worldwide, and it has made its investors a ton of money. In short, this is a classic American success story, and free-market success story. Therefore, the company has a lot of enemies.

In fact, Wal-Mart is featuring in Democratic campaign rhetoric, and other rhetoric, as a villain, along with Enron and Halliburton. Is this wise of politicians, considering that 100 million people shop at Wal-Mart every week? We'll leave that to the political strategists.

The roster of Wal-Mart foes includes the following: Democratic politicians, particularly those trying to impress unions; union leaders (while we're on the subject); left-wing pundits; a handful of right-wing pundits, concerned for localism; and arbiters of taste (mainly soi-disant).

In the Democratic primaries, John Kerry knocked Wal-Mart on a number of fronts, particularly that of health care: He denounced the company's provisions for its employees as "disgraceful" and "unconscionable." He also said, "They throw a lot of money around, they get a lot of things happening, but it ain't necessarily good for the community." (Here, he is attempting a little populism—he did not learn that language in his Swiss boarding school.) Kerry continued, "We need to stand up and demand they behave corporately responsibly." (That's more like it.) The candidate suggested that the company be punished by loss of tax deductions.

Howard Dean, too, was a fighter against Wal-Mart. (His Vermont was the very last state to accept a Wal-Mart store.) In the presidential primaries, Dean took the usual line that Wal-Mart "kills small towns." Somewhat refreshingly, however, he promised audiences that if he got the chance to "do what I want to do on trade agreements, you are going to pay higher prices at Wal-Mart"—he would crack down on the Chinese, for one thing.

John Edwards, before he bit the dust, slammed the company for "driving down the pay scale for everybody." Richard Gephardt—the most unionized of the candidates—offered the opinion that the company was ripe for an anti-trust suit. And Dennis Kucinich, bless him, warned that someday Wal-Mart might "take over" Iraq. (The *New York Sun* caught that last nugget, and others.)

The tale of Kerry and Wal-Mart has a nice twist: Part of his fortune rests on the company, because his wife owns between $1 million and $5 million in Wal-Mart stock. That may be chump change for the Kerry-Heinzes, but it counts. And a Wal-Mart spokesman noted cheekily that Wal-Mart sells Heinz soup—made in Muscatine, Iowa—to the good people of South Korea. How's that for globalization?

The Democrats aren't through with their anti-Wal-Marting. Rep. George Miller, the veteran lefty from California, ordered what might be called a hit study on Wal-Mart, through the Committee on Education and the Workforce, on which he is the senior Democrat. The study was drawn up by his staff. Released in February, it maintained that Wal-Mart actually costs taxpayers money, because—so mean is the company to its employees—all the rest of us have to subsidize their health care, child care, and so on. It is the Democratic aim to paint Wal-Mart as an awful machine both Dickensian and Orwellian, gobbling up towns, people, and souls. This portrait is ridiculous—but many enjoy it.

AN ALL-PURPOSE BOGEYMAN

What, exactly, are the complaints against Wal-Mart? They are numerous—it is almost blamed for the common cold—but the main ones appear to be these: that it is too big. That it is too impersonal. That it "drains the life out of Main Street." That it is "Sprawl Mart." That it pays its employees too little. That it denies them health care. That it is un-unionized (that much is true). That it employs illegal aliens (about that, more later). That it relies on for-

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eign goods. That it is square (banning racy magazines, for instance). That it is crassly American. That it is vulgar.

Frankly, more than a bit of snobbery goes into Wal-Mart bashing. This is a store that sells every product under the sun at very low prices to Middle America. (It is the biggest seller of groceries, toys, and furniture. It sells 30 percent of all disposable diapers purchased in the U.S., 30 percent of hair products, etc.) Wal-Mart is gloriously, unabashedly, star-spangledly American. I hope it's not too McCarthyite to suggest that those who dislike Wal-Mart are those who may not be so crazy about America *tout court*.

Daniel Mindus of the Center for Consumer Freedom points out that Wal-Mart has become, for the Left, like the SUV, or the oil and gas industry, or the gun—a simple hate object. Wal-Mart fires the passions of anti-globalism, anti-consumerism, and anti-corporatism (along with snobbery). This company may be considered the most flagrant expression of democratic capitalism, loud testimony to the size, scope, entrepreneurialism, and efficiency of America. That doesn't sit well with a good many people.

As can be seen from the remark about Heinz soup and Korea, the company is pretty adept at responding to critics. This is not a patsy company, not a "suicidal corporation," to borrow Paul H. Weaver's memorable phrase. It invests heavily in PR, and it invests heavily in politicians: Wal-PAC is a formidable political action committee, the number-two such giver in the country (next to Goldman Sachs). And if someone blasts the company on television or in print, Wal-Mart is likely to respond—nimbly and tartly, too.

'Gloriously, unabashedly, star-spangledly American'

The company says, basically, that it does the service of employing over a million people, and of supplying high-quality goods at rock-bottom prices to many millions more. That is a bad thing? Critics like to contend that Wal-Mart employees live "paycheck to paycheck"; that is not true. But what is true—certainly truer—is Wal-Mart's rejoinder: "We are the store of countless people who live paycheck to paycheck, wanting and needing decent products at decent prices." Touché.

Many object to a Wal-Mart in their community, but most people welcome it—they are just not the activist type, and seldom write articles for the newspaper or deliver commentaries on public television. Some of us have a romantic feeling about Mom-'n'-Pop stores: but people vote with their feet, and they are not, most of them, voting for Mom 'n' Pop. Besides which, how many people did Mom 'n' Pop employ, and what sort of benefit package did they offer *them*?

About health insurance: More than 90 percent of Wal-Mart employees have it. Fifty percent of those employees get their insurance through the company; and the rest get it through . . . Well, teenagers get it through their parents; others are covered by their spouse's plan; senior citizens have Medicare, or benefits from a previous employer. There are options. Wal-Mart is a huge employer of the young—those wanting their first jobs—and the old (those in retirement, or semi-retirement, wanting to keep a hand in, to mingle with the folks). A company spokesman says, hard-headedly, "If we weren't a desirable employer, we wouldn't be able to fulfill our growth potential. We have competitive wages and benefits in every community we serve. We don't start at minimum wage anywhere in the country—unlike our unionized competitors."

Ah, yes, the unions. It is an ongoing affront to organized labor that Wal-Mart, the biggest and baddest, remains un-unionized. The United Food & Commercial Workers has a whole department devoted to Wal-Mart—to targeting it, unionizing it. The UFCW campaigns as though its very existence, as a union, depended on success.

No one should suppose that a Wal-Mart job is a demeaning or a dead-end job. Two-thirds of Wal-Mart managers come from the ranks of hourly employees. The company constantly stresses that it is a place of opportunity, and this is not mere corporate propaganda. Interestingly, the accusations now hurled at Wal-Mart are exactly those once hurled at McDonald's. Remember "McJobs"? That phrase had a life in the 1988 presidential campaign, as Governor Dukakis went on about "good jobs at good wages." (Since employment was so high, one could hardly complain about the raw number of jobs.) It took Thomas Sowell and other smart people to explain that McDonald's was important for those wanting to reach the first rung of the job ladder—they could then climb, within McDonald's or elsewhere.

A word, now, about illegal aliens—this is one of the Wal-Mart "scandals." Last October, the feds staged some well-publicized raids on Wal-Mart stores; they busted a bevy of illegals. According to the company—and there is no reason to doubt it—Wal-Mart had worked for three years with the government, which was investigating some of the cleaning contractors used by the company. Wal-Mart "continued to employ the contractors long after we would have brought those services in house, at a cost savings to us." (So says a company spokesman.) The federal investigation continues. Wal-Mart is not off the hook. But the company can't help pointing out that many of those whose hearts usually bleed for illegals, and their right to work, go positively jingo when it comes to Wal-Mart—and Wal-Mart alone.

And, yes, the company is a heavy importer of foreign goods, including from China. This is a noteworthy development, as Wal-Mart started out with a "Made in America" theme. It was quasi-protectionist. Now the Wal-Mart theme is, "Made Anywhere, So What?" A company vice president told *Business Week*, "The mindset around here is, we're agents for our customers." Critics who never breathe a word about Laogai, in other circumstances, get all human-rightsy when discussion turns to Wal-Mart. (Laogai is the Chinese gulag.)

THE *TIMES* NO LIKE

In the field of Wal-Mart sniping, the *New York Times* is pretty much champion. It has not exactly crusaded against Wal-Mart—not like it did against Augusta National Golf Club, in the time of editor Howell Raines. But the paper emits a steady stream of

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stories casting Wal-Mart in the worst possible light.

One story—published on March 6—began in almost comical fashion: "Alexander Luten's grandfather did well for a man born into slavery." A right-wing parodist could not improve on that. What story against Wal-Mart *wouldn't* begin with an evocation of slavery? The *Times*'s article, headlined "In a Historic Black Hamlet, Wal-Mart Finds Resistance," concerned Sandfly, Ga., and the arrival of a Wal-Mart Supercenter there. The writer, Andrew Jacobs, did not cite any particular offense, but said that opponents "see Wal-Mart's coming as disrespectful to a community that feels intense pride in its past and its roots in West African culture." One local was quoted as saying, "Our culture and values were passed down from our parents and great-grandparents, and we are trying to pass them down to our kids." How Wal-Mart might impede this process is a mystery. But Wal-Mart is seen, by some, as a sinister force, with a magical capacity to destroy almost anything.

And did you read this, last December? "The annual celebration of the American consumer economy—the holiday shopping season—is just underway, and Wal-Mart, the juggernaut of retailing, already seems to have claimed its first victim." That would be F. A. O. Schwarz, the old-line (and pricey) toy seller, which was on the verge of going under—Wal-Mart had cut severely into its business, selling the same toys at much lower prices. *Time* magazine went the *Times* one better, however, with the headline "Will Wal-Mart Steal Christmas?" (The newspaper itself noted this.) Everyone knows that Christmas isn't *really* Christmas unless you overpay for toys.

A COMPANY LIKE NO OTHER

Because Wal-Mart is so big—and so important—it attracts endless flak. According to *Fortune*, the company was sued 6,087 times in 2002 alone, "or about once every 90 minutes every day of the year." And surely Wal-Mart is guilty here and there. As a company spokesman remarked for this same *Fortune* article, "When you have one million people working for you, there are always going to be a couple of knuckleheads out there who do dumb things." The company adjusts, adapts, copes, even to the point of a little PC: A major Wal-Mart executive has grumped about the number of white men working as Wal-Mart managers. (Too many.) And the company's detractors may be interested to know that its anti-discrimination policies cover gays.

Moreover, Wal-Mart has hired a "reputation consultant" and aired TV ads touting the company as a friendly, nurturing place to work. As it was morning in America, it is morning at Wal-Mart.

But warmth and fuzziness aside, Wal-Mart is a bracing, historic enterprise. As Larry Kudlow—the economist, TV personality, and enthusiast for capitalism—says, "They have invented the modern company. They are really the first Internetized, globalized company, engaged in real-time inventories, real-time pricing—everything. They are the model for everyone else." Brink Lindsey, the Cato Institute trade guru, calls Wal-Mart "an agent of dynamism," meaning, naturally, that "others have an interest in demonizing it." Furthermore, "Wal-Mart is a distinctly American phenomenon, and therefore an anti-European phenomenon." Euros and their likenesses in America have no

Wal-Mart has done McDonald's this favor: It has replaced the hamburger chain as Bogeyman No. 1 in the mind and rhetoric of the Left.

The *Times* had the good grace to quote a Federal Reserve economist who said, "Wal-Mart is the greatest thing that ever happened to low-income Americans."

Editorially, the paper has decried "the Wal-Martization of America," claiming that the company's effect on the national workforce "threatens to push many Americans into poverty." This betrays a strange understanding of economics, and it is the same understanding that has defamed McDonald's for years. Wal-Mart has done McDonald's this favor: It has replaced the hamburger chain as Bogeyman No. 1 in the mind and rhetoric of the Left. The fact is, Wal-Mart is held—by many economists—to have singlehandedly kept American unemployment down, and productivity up or steady, in lean times.

Of course, the left-wing magazines have been hard on Wal-Mart for many a moon. Listen to a recent "comment" in *The Nation*: "The Los Angeles area remains one of the few urban centers that Wal-Mart has yet to penetrate. But having gained a foothold in suburbia, the chain is now furiously pummeling the gates of the urban core, whose potential consumer base is disproportionately immigrant and poor—and therefore primed to respond to Wal-Mart's discount appeal."

Bear in mind: This is considered a bad thing.

patience for Wal-Mart. "The Europeans sniff at our job creation," says Lindsey, "while their job market is stagnant. They say, 'Oh, America just has Wal-Mart-type jobs.' Actually, the percentage of managerial and professional jobs in our country has climbed steadily. Yes, we have a lot of low-end jobs, but we have a lot of young people and older people in our workforce, unlike Europe. There, they don't let people get hired, they don't let industries move fast, they don't create jobs"—they just snort at America and Wal-Mart, unwilling to dent their own double-digit unemployment.

None of this is to say that brave new economic worlds are always comfortable, for everybody. In a column, Thomas Sowell quoted Judge Robert Bork to the effect that "somebody always gets hurt in a courtroom." Added Sowell, "Somebody always gets hurt in an economy that is growing. You can't keep on doing things the old way and still get the benefits of the new way." Or, as a lady from Sandfly, Ga., put it to the *New York Times*, "Change is here. Sometimes you just have to accept it and move on." Only in this instance, change is overwhelmingly good: Wal-Mart employs masses of workers, has made investors piles of money, has saved consumers a fortune. How many other companies do as well? How many politicians contribute as much? **NR**

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■ AT WAR II

Dick Clarke's Not-So-Grand Stand

A former national-security aide is all over the map

RICHARD LOWRY

WHAT do they say about a woman scorned? She apparently is nothing compared with a career bureaucrat. Hell hath no fury—especially if *60 Minutes* is willing to play along.

Former Clinton and Bush counterterrorism official Richard Clarke is an intelligent and well-informed man, who projects a serious (if rather egomaniacal) image. His anti-Bush case has been helped by the fact that his essential charge—that the Bush administration should have done more sooner to try to prevent 9/11—seems undeniable in light of events. (Clinton should have done more, Congress should have done more, the media should have done more—everyone should have done more.)

Clarke has taken this inherent credibility and used it to make a discreditable case against the Bush administration's pre-9/11 counterterror policy. In August 2002, when he was still a White House official, Clarke gave a press briefing that portrayed the Bush team grappling energetically with the issue of terrorism before 9/11. By way of explaining the difference between that session and his critique of Bush in his book (*Against All Enemies*), his TV appearances, and his testimony to the 9/11 commission, Clarke said it is mostly a matter of "tenor and tone." So it is. He extends a sympathetic understanding to the Clinton administration's failure to adopt a more aggressive anti–al-Qaeda posture, while subjecting the Bush administration's delay in doing so to the harshest possible interpretation.

About the Clinton administration, Clarke says, in effect, that he himself would have been more aggressive, but other very concerned and serious officials disagreed, for understandable reasons: the sheer difficulty of changing policy; the importance of other priorities, such as the Middle East peace process and Kosovo; the

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broader domestic political context, from the distraction created by Clinton's impeachment to the fact that "only" 35 Americans had been killed by al-Qaeda prior to September 11.

Clarke easily could say much the same thing about the Bush administration: that changing policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan implicated a host of important foreign-policy questions that had to be considered carefully; that Bush policymakers, delayed by the Florida fiasco and the Senate confirmation process, only got settled into office in the spring of 2001, making their shift in anti-terror policy by the end of summer relatively swift; that the Bush team had gone further in eight months than the Clinton team had gone in eight years.

A SEXED-UP CASE

Clarke has instead done the opposite, significantly sexing up his case against Bush. Putting aside the question of Iraq, Clarke's anti-Bush argument has three major prongs. He complains that terrorism wasn't immediately taken up by the highest-level officials, but instead worked on by their deputies. He argues that it took too much time for the Bush team to act on his proposals for Afghanistan. He thinks that the Bush administration didn't act seriously enough on worrisome intelligence "chatter" in the summer of 2001 about an impending al-Qaeda attack.

Clarke had a few ideas in 2001 that he had been pursuing in the Clinton administration as well: aiding the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance; increasing funding for the CIA; choosing a standard of evidence for attributing responsibility for the bombing of the USS *Cole*; going forward with Predator reconnaissance flights in Afghanistan and preparing an armed version of the drone plane.

It is worth considering how these proposals fared in the Clinton administration, which Clarke portrays as an anti-terror stalwart. Clarke first circulated his anti–al-Qaeda proposals among Clinton officials in late August and September 1998. According to the 9/11 commission's preliminary report, "This strategy was not formally adopted, and Cabinet-level participants . . . have little or no recollection of it, at least as a formal policy document."

What of Clarke's specific ideas? Clarke advocated retaliating in Afghanistan for the October 2000 attack against the *Cole*, but Clinton officials opposed the idea. This is how the Clinton team handled the question of aiding the Northern Alliance, in the words of the commission: "The debate continued inconclusively throughout the last year and a half of the Clinton administration." As for the CIA, it was supposed to get more resources in the 1990s, but the 9/11 commission reports that "baseline spending requests, and thus core staffing, remained flat. The CIA told us that Clarke kept promising more budget support, but could never deliver."

Clinton officials make much of President Clinton's willingness to order the CIA to kill bin Laden. The administration never managed, however, to give the CIA crystal-clear authority to do that, stipulating that the CIA must first try to capture bin Laden—an inherently complicated, risky operation—and kill him only if necessary in the course of doing so.

Given this track record, one would think Clarke would be harshly critical of the Clinton team, whatever his disappointments with the Bush team. But Clarke saves all his fire for Bush. Why?

At one level, Clarke has a purely bureaucratic complaint: that his ideas were considered by "the deputies," the officials just below the level of cabinet officers (Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Armitage, et al.) rather than by "the principals" themselves (Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell, et al.). This is considered a travesty by Clarke. In the Clinton administration, he had been given free rein by Sandy Berger, who had outsize power for a national security adviser, and Clarke himself was able to call meetings of the principals.

Condoleezza Rice re-established regular order, in which the National Security Council and its staff wouldn't have such extraordinary clout. Influence flowed back to the traditional centers of power at Defense and State. So Clarke couldn't call a meeting of the principals to consider his ideas, as he desperately wanted. But the deputies met seven times between April and September 10 on the issue of terrorism. As Clarke himself admits, when the principals took up the proposed anti–al-Qaeda strategy on September 4, they quickly approved the plan. This was partly because the issues had already been worked thoroughly by the deputies—exactly the process that so outrages Clarke.

One would think Clarke would be harshly critical of the Clinton team, whatever his disappointments with the Bush team. But Clarke saves all his fire for Bush. Why?

Substantively, the Bush team took Clarke's ideas and made them marginally more aggressive. What had been a strategy that sought to "roll back" and "contain" al-Qaeda aimed to "eliminate" it instead. Clarke takes credit for this change, and he probably was the one to type the word "eliminate" into the strategy document, but the shift came from the top. Bush famously said in May that he was tired of "swatting flies," and Condi Rice, according to the 9/11 commission, wanted ideas that would mean "taking the offensive" against al-Qaeda.

Clarke has been particularly harsh about the delay in adopting his proposals to aid the Northern Alliance and fly the Predator over Afghanistan while an armed version was being developed. The Bush team was hesitant about aiding the Northern Alliance because it worried about the faction's reliability and about alienating other forces in the country. It eventually decided to aid the Northern Alliance along with other anti-Taliban groups.

Clarke suggests that resistance to his view on the Predator was irrational. But CIA director George Tenet and Air Force officials wanted to wait until they had an armed Predator tested and ready

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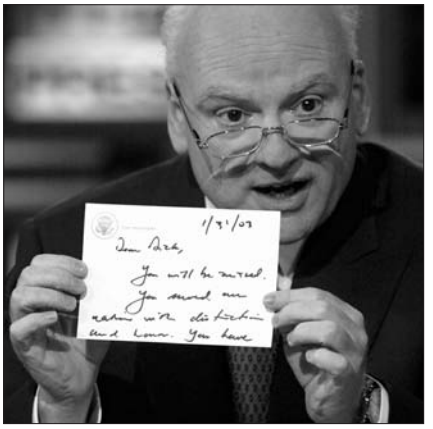
to go. They were afraid that flying reconnaissance flights would tip off the Taliban and al-Qaeda about the plane, taking away the element of surprise when an armed Predator was ready to take a shot at terrorist leaders. The 9/11 commission notes that this armed Predator got up and running relatively quickly: "A program that would ordinarily have taken years was, [Air Force officials] said, finished in months; they were 'throwing out the books on the normal acquisition process just to press on and get it done.'"

What emerged from the Bush team was a three-phase plan. It represented a departure, if not a radical one, from the Clinton approach. An envoy would demand the expulsion of bin Laden from Afghanistan. If that failed, the Taliban would be pressured through diplomacy and proxy forces in Afghanistan. If that failed, the "United States would seek to overthrow the Taliban regime through more direct action," in the words of the commission—a reference to U.S. military action. The timeframe for the plan was three years. The strategy was ready for Bush's approval just days before 9/11, making its consideration seem inexcusably tardy.

But Clarke himself has provided perspective on the difference between adopting this plan in early 2001 and adopting it in September: to wit, it probably didn't matter much. During the commission hearings, he was asked, "Assuming that [your Afghan proposals] had all been adopted, say, on January 26, year 2001, is there the remotest chance that it would have prevented 9/11?" Clarke answered, "No."



Clarke on Meet the Press

What Clarke suggests may have prevented 9/11 is if the administration had gone to "battle stations" when intelligence "chatter" about impending attacks increased in the summer of 2001. This is essentially another bureaucratic complaint: that there weren't enough high-level meetings. Clarke's ideal is the Clinton administration in December 1999, which convened an intensive series of meetings when terrorist threats increased around the time of the millennium. Clarke implies that these meetings helped foil a plot to attack Los Angeles International Airport, although it's not clear exactly how. The key event was an alert customs agent on the Canadian-Washington State border noticing a suspicious-acting Arab driver in a car filled with explosives.

Now, it is possible that more high-level attention in Washington in the summer of 2001 could have unearthed some telling piece of information further down the bureaucratic chain, but this is very speculative. Also, Clarke obscures the extent to which the government did go on alert in the summer of 2001.

According to the 9/11 commission, "the CIA again went into what the DCI [George Tenet] described as 'Millennium threat mode' engaging with foreign liaison and disrupting operations around the world. At least one planned terrorist attack in Europe may have been successfully disrupted during the summer of 2001." The commission reports that U.S. counter-terror officials "identified 30 possible overseas targets and launched disruption operations around the world."

Most of the effort was focused overseas—U.S. embassies were temporarily closed, the Fifth Fleet was redeployed, foreign officials were given warnings—because that's where an attack was thought most likely to occur. At home, the FBI issued a threat advisory. There was an FAA warning. Then, things calmed down. The commission reports that "by early August, DCI Tenet said that intelligence suggested that whatever terrorist activity might have been originally planned had been delayed." Clarke agreed: "On July 27 Clarke reported to Rice . . . that the spike in intelligence indicating a near-term attack appeared to have ceased, but he urged them to keep readiness high."

A WILL AND A WAY

So Clarke's anti-Bush case falls down. But there are two ways in which Bush officials have gone too far in trying to defend themselves. They have joined ex-Clinton aides in declaring that military action in Afghanistan prior to 9/11 would have been impossible, both as a matter of domestic politics and as a matter of international relations. This shows a lack of imagination. Indeed, all the wars of the 1990s were fought without strong domestic support. Remember: The Clinton administration fought a war in Kosovo without congressional authorization and without significant public backing. If a president had explained the al-Qaeda threat, the public almost certainly would have rallied behind military action. The international situation would have been trickier, but if the U.S. could twist Russia's arm in behalf of a "war of choice" in Kosovo, why not Pakistan's arm in behalf of a much more important war in Afghanistan?

Bush officials also insist that nothing could have prevented 9/11. Not true. If the CIA and the FBI had been better cooperating, if something like the Patriot Act with its enhanced surveillance powers had been in place, if there had been tighter security and more explicit profiling at airports, and if immigration and visa laws had been taken seriously, it would have been possible to unravel the plot. All of these ideas had been talked about, and some even proposed in Congress, prior to 9/11. That they were ignored represents a broad failure of our political culture.

If Clarke's hit against the Bush team is unfair, in one sense President Bush brought it on himself. It is Bush's fault that he is stuck defending the pre-9/11 CIA and FBI, and the posture of the U.S. government generally. If he had fired a few important people, including George Tenet, and announced a great housecleaning in light of the failure represented by 9/11, he would be in a much stronger position politically. He didn't do this for a goo-goo reason (he didn't want the disruption of such changes right after 9/11) and for a characteristic one (once someone is considered part of his team, Bush is very reluctant to fire him).

The deepest lesson for Bush from the Clarke controversy is to do more rather than less to prevent the next terrorist attack and to do it sooner rather than later. If there are any domestic or international initiatives (more profiling at airports, more pressure on the Saudis, etc.) that the Bush administration is holding back on to avoid domestic or international howls, prudence, both for security reasons and for political ones, dictates that it do otherwise. Who knows what Cassandra buried somewhere in the bureaucracy has the makings of a future book? **NR**

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■ POLITICS

The Democratic Myth Machine

About John McCain and Max Cleland, those (alleged) political martyrs

BYRON YORK

If you spend much time listening to John Kerry, Democratic chairman Terry McAuliffe, or any of a host of other national party leaders, you'll hear lots of references to something called the "Republican smear machine." Sometimes it's called the "Bush smear machine," or the "attack machine," but in each case Democrats use the phrase to describe what they claim is a pattern of dirty politics by the president and his GOP supporters in recent elections.

Now, Democrats charge, Republicans are at it again. "George Bush and the Republican smear machine have begun trotting out the same old tired lines of attack," Kerry said during a February campaign appearance in Virginia. In years past, Democrats have taken it lying down, Kerry explained, but now things are different. "This is one Democrat who's going to fight back," he vowed. "I've only just begun to fight."

While Kerry and his fellow Democrats claim that Republicans have been guilty of all sorts of dirty tricks over the years, the "smear machine" allegation actually refers to two very specific instances in which Democrats believe—or at least would like their audiences to believe—that Republicans have smeared and bullied their way to victory over more principled opponents. "It was the Republicans who went after John McCain and attacked his patriotism, attacked his wife, attacked his children," McAuliffe said recently, referring to George W. Bush's victory in the 2000 primaries. "[And] it was the Republicans who went after Max Cleland, a triple amputee, and put up pictures with him and Saddam Hussein," McAuliffe continued, referring to the Georgia senator's defeat at the hands of GOP challenger Saxby Chambliss in 2002.

By now, the idea that both McCain and Cleland were victims of the Republican attack machine has become accepted wisdom. But is it true? A look at what really happened in 2000 and 2002 suggests that the conventional wisdom is more wishful thinking than fact.

THE McCAIN MYTH

The allegation against Bush in the McCain affair stems almost entirely from the 2000 South Carolina primary. McCain had beaten Bush badly in New Hampshire, and Bush might have been knocked out of the race if he had lost again in South Carolina. Therefore, according to the Democratic scenario, Bush viciously attacked McCain, smearing him with a so-called "push poll" in which the Bush campaign or its supporters called thousands of voters, ostensibly for the purpose of taking a poll, but actually to spread negative personal information about McCain. Only by resorting to underhanded tactics, the story goes, was Bush able to win South Carolina and, later, the GOP nomination.

Even though the campaign was hard fought from the beginning, the controversy really began on Feb. 10, 2000, nine days before the primary. McCain held a town-hall meeting in Spartanburg, and a woman named Donna Duren said her 14-year-old son, who idolized McCain, had answered the phone the night before and had become distressed. "He was so upset," Duren told McCain. "He said, 'Mom, someone told me that Senator McCain is a cheat and a liar and a fraud.'" "What you've just told me has had a very profound effect on me," McCain told Duren. He subsequently sent an impassioned message to Bush: "I'm calling on my good friend George Bush to stop this now. He comes from a better family. He knows better than this." Duren's story became a staple of McCain's campaign. He told it at a debate, in stump speeches, and on TV. But despite all the attention McCain lavished on the tale, there was no evidence, beyond Duren's testimony, that it was true.

The Bush campaign had hired an out-of-state company to make about 200,000 "advocacy" calls to voters. After McCain's criticism, the campaign released the script of those calls. The script said Bush was "working hard and stressing his message of reform with results." It went on to say, "Unfortunately, the race has turned ugly," and urged listeners, "Don't be misled by McCain's negative tactics." It ended with more positive words about Bush. There was no mention of cheats or liars or frauds.

Nearly a week after McCain's initial accusations, the *Los Angeles Times* looked into the matter. The paper found voters who had received the "advocacy" calls, but none who had received a call like the one described by Duren. "The McCain campaign has provided the names of only six voters complaining about calls from the Bush side," the paper said. Of the voters the *Times*'s reporters could reach, "three described questions that, while negative, appear to have been part of a legitimate poll. Another said she heard no negative information at all." The paper found no one who supported Duren's accusation.

The lack of evidence, while not proof that the call story was untrue, is nevertheless telling. Republican strategists point out that in controversies over mass callings, there has almost always been a tape of the calls, usually made by the answering machines of voters who received them. When Pat Robertson made a negative call on Bush's behalf in Michigan, for example, the story ended up on the front page of the *New York Times*, because someone had a tape of it. Likewise, when the McCain campaign made its infamous anti-Bush "Catholic voter alert" calls in Michigan, there was taped evidence. But there was no such evidence of the "cheat/liar/fraud" calls.

"If those calls took place, then where is the tape?" asks one GOP strategist. "You can't make more than five phone calls and not have it end up on somebody's answering machine. They've never been able to produce the individual who made the calls, they've never been able to produce the phone vendor who made the calls, and they've never been able to produce a script or a tape recording."

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The same was true of rumors of other "push poll" calls that allegedly claimed that McCain had fathered an illegitimate mixed-race child. Although later commentary has simply accepted the existence of such calls as fact—in January of this year, National Public Radio's Linda Wertheimer reported that "mysterious callers posing as pollsters asked voters how they felt about John McCain's black child"—there is no hard evidence that the calls occurred.

That is not to say there was no low-road campaigning. A Bob Jones University professor named Richard Hand, who had no connection to the Bush forces, sent out an e-mail containing a variety of charges against McCain, including the one that he had fathered illegitimate children. But in that case, there was evidence of the smear: the e-mail. Hand's name quickly became public, and his message was discredited.

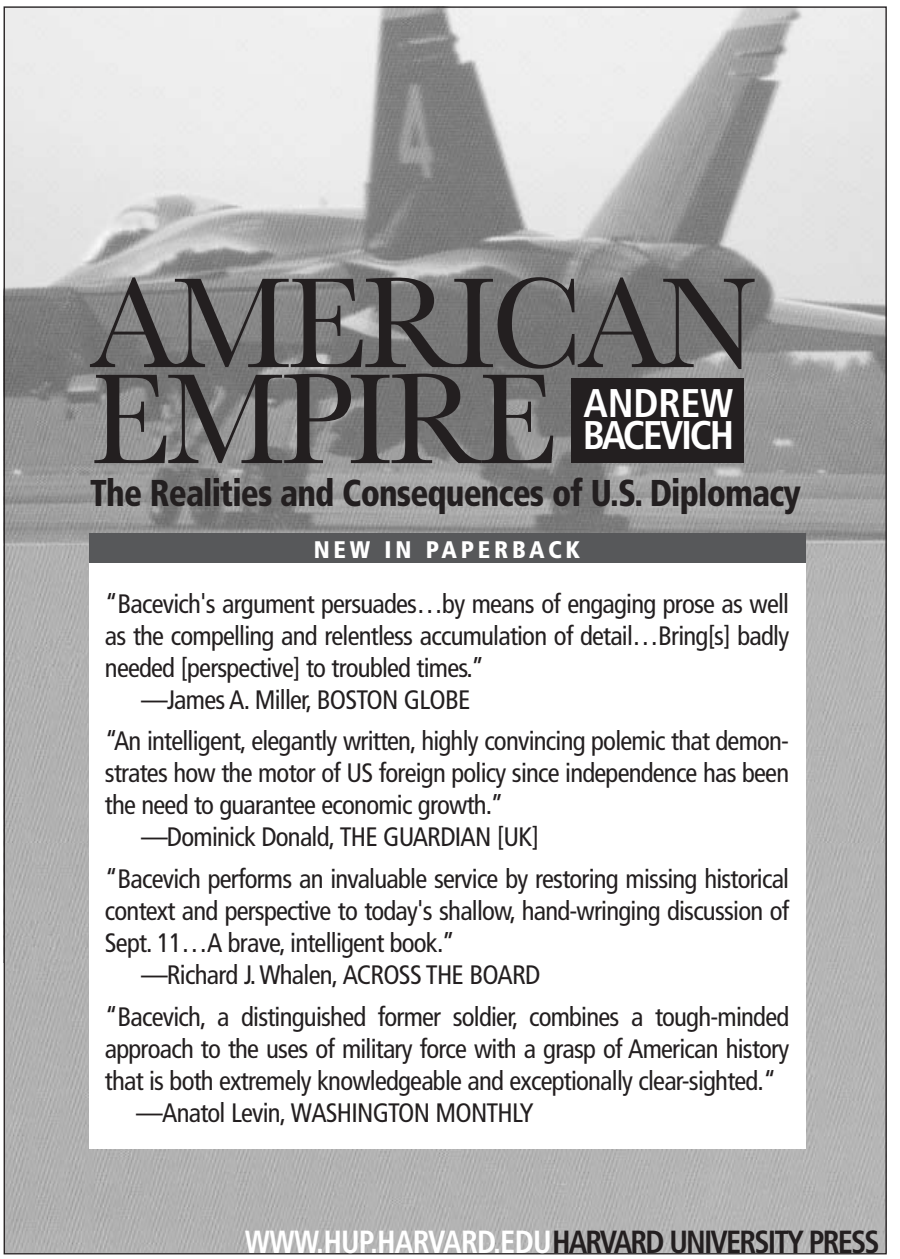
McCain, meanwhile, was doing real, substantial things to lose the race. He alienated a number of party loyalists by openly courting the support of Democrats. "I say to independents, Democrats, Libertarians, vegetarians, come on over," McCain said at rally after rally. McCain further alienated GOP voters with a negative ad saying that Bush "twists the truth like Clinton. We're all pretty tired of that." Bush's response got a lot of applause in the final debate when he told McCain, "Whatever you do, don't equate my integrity and trustworthiness to Bill Clinton. That's about as low a blow as you can give in a Republican primary." In the end, McCain lost, with 42 percent to Bush's 53 percent. Among Republicans, McCain lost big, with 26 percent to Bush's 69 percent. "The things that beat him in South Carolina were when he compared Bush to Clinton and he publicly encouraged liberals and Democrats to vote for him in the primary," says the Republican strategist.

Nevertheless, the myth of the anti-McCain smear persists, cited on a regular basis by the Kerry campaign. In early March, when for a few hours McCain fueled speculation that he might become Kerry's running mate, a Kerry spokesman took the opportunity to bring it all up again. "The Republican party shamed itself in 2000," the spokesman told the New York *Daily News*, "when they allowed the Bush attack machine to smear John McCain."

MAD MAX

The other enduring Democratic grievance is the 2002 re-election loss of Democratic senator Max Cleland of Georgia. Cleland, the veteran who lost both legs and an arm in a grenade explosion in Vietnam, ran against Republican Saxby Chambliss, then a four-term member of the House. Campaign watchers knew the race would be tough for Cleland. In 1996, he won a very narrow victory, defeating his Republican opponent by 30,024 votes out of 2.25 million cast. Since that time, Cleland had built a voting record that ran contrary to the wishes of a significant portion of the generally conservative Georgia electorate. In 1999, for example, Cleland earned a 100 percent rating from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action, and a zero from the American Conservative Union.

Chambliss hammered away at Cleland's voting record. One of Chambliss's early successes was a series of simple, low-budget, and very effective ten-second ads. In each ad, a black screen with white lettering appeared, with a woman narrating. One ad said, "Max Cleland voted three times to make partial-birth abortions legal." The screen changed to a photo of Cleland, and the narrator said, "Why would he do that?" Another ad said, "Max Cleland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—Richard J. Whalen, ACROSS THE BOARD
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—Anatol Levin, WASHINGTON MONTHLY
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voted to ban the Boy Scouts from meeting in public schools. Why would he do that?" A half-dozen others followed the same formula.

For his part, Cleland ran ads accusing Chambliss of wanting to gut Medicare and deny health benefits to the poor. One such ad ended: "The more you learn about Saxby Chambliss, the sicker you get." But the issue that drew the most attention in the ad war was national security. President Bush was then urging Congress to give the new Department of Homeland Security the flexibility to hire and fire workers without going through some of the union processes that were impeding personnel decisions in other government departments. The Senate Democratic leadership, backed by their union supporters, opposed the president. Georgia's other Democratic senator, Zell Miller, sided with the president. Cleland sided with the Democratic leadership.

Chambliss began to make it an issue in the campaign. On Sept. 30, 2002, he wrote Cleland a letter, saying, "I implore you to reconsider your current position against President Bush. I urge you to join Senator Miller [on this issue]." Cleland did not change his position, but, sensitive to the political risks involved, made a campaign commercial saying he supported the president's homeland-security efforts. Like many of Cleland's other ads, it ended with the phrase, "Max Cleland—the courage to lead."

That was too much for the Chambliss campaign. "He ran an ad showing him with the president, saying he voted with the president to support homeland security," Chambliss recalls. "That was just wrong." The Chambliss campaign came up with a now-notorious ad in response. The ad opened with a split-screen picture. In the upper left was video of Osama bin Laden. In the upper right was video of U.S. soldiers. In the lower left was video of U.S. fighter planes, and in the lower right was video of Saddam Hussein. The narration said, "As America faces terrorists and extremist dictators, Max Cleland runs television ads claiming he has the courage to lead." The video changed to pictures of Cleland, with the narration continuing: "He says he supports President Bush at every opportunity, but that's not the truth. Since July, Max Cleland has voted against the president's vital homeland-security efforts eleven times. Max Cleland says he has the courage to lead. But the record proves Max Cleland is just misleading."

Cleland and his supporters went ballistic, claiming the ad questioned his patriotism and belittled his Vietnam service. "I don't have to prove my patriotism to anybody," Cleland said. "I volunteered to defend my country 35 years ago and served in the war of my generation. The individual who's made those attacks on me never served in the American military at all." But Cleland had a tough time convincing voters that the ad in fact impugned his patriotism. Chambliss kept running the ad (although he took out the pictures of bin Laden and Saddam). And Cleland suffered a real blow on the national-security front when the Veterans of Foreign Wars endorsed Chambliss, saying the Republican was "more supportive of our legislative agenda."

Cleland lost, with 46 percent to Chambliss's 53 percent. But after his defeat, Cleland's fellow Democrats kept up the campaign. Sen. Patrick Leahy called Chambliss "a draft dodger who attacked Senator Cleland on his patriotism." Kerry called it "one of the most despicable campaigns ever conducted." Liberal columnists took up the charge. Still, there's no indication the voting results were about anything other than Cleland's record as a senator. He had originally won a Senate seat on the strength of his record as Georgia secretary of state and on his service in Vietnam. The 2002 election was the first time Cleland had to run on a voting record, and he found it tough going. "He didn't want to answer for his voting record," Chambliss recalls. "He sent up the smokescreen about questioning his patriotism."

The McCain and Cleland myths give John Kerry an all-purpose response to Republicans who question his record.

Even Zell Miller, Cleland's friend and defender who says he still considers the ad, or at least the inclusion of bin Laden's picture, a "low blow," doesn't blame the commercial for Cleland's defeat. "I think the reason he lost is because the Democratic leadership in the Senate, eleven different times, asked him and put pressure on him to vote against the Homeland Security bill that the Democratic leadership and the employees' unions were opposing," Miller says. "If you vote the Democratic party line in Washington . . . you can't do that and be re-elected in Georgia."

THE CONTINUING CAMPAIGN

In some circles today, it has simply become accepted wisdom that Cleland and McCain lost because of unethical Republican tactics. That, in turn, has become a key argument of the Kerry campaign as it seeks to preemptively tag Republicans with the dirty-campaigning label. For example, when Chambliss criticized Kerry's Senate voting record, a Kerry spokesman said, "The GOP has unleashed the same partisans they used to smear John McCain and Max Cleland in an orchestrated attack against John Kerry."

Such statements will undoubtedly come up again and again as the campaign proceeds. The McCain and Cleland myths are important to Democrats not only because they explain electoral defeats in terms of Republican misconduct, but also because they give John Kerry an all-purpose response to Republicans who question his record. Yet it's not clear that such a response will work any better in 2004 than it did in 2000 and 2002. The president's campaign will not be brushed back by Democratic complaints, and voters will likely make their decision based on their assessment of each man's performance in office. Bush will question Kerry's record, and Kerry will question Bush's. That's fair. "An honest look at someone's voting record is not a personal attack, nor is it a smear against someone," says Sen. Miller. "Questioning one's voting record is not questioning one's patriotism." **NR**

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the long view

ROB LONG

THE CLARKE CHRONICLES

From *A View from the Throne: My Life with George III*, by Richard Clarke:

. . . and saw that he was satisfied mightily, which pleased us both, as was his custom with the ladies of the court, &c. "Sire," I whispered to him whilst absently powdering his wig, "it seems that there be troubles in the American colonies which, perchance, owing to your goodself and wise forethought, might be put to a swift end quite rapidly, with but the merest signal from your thoughtful and philosophical person."

The king looked at me quite darkly. "Troubles, sir?" he thundered. "You talk to me of troubles?"

"Sire," I replied quite forcefully—for I was known to stand my ground, even with kings—"the American colonies are forming societies of dissent and treason. Only with forceful royal action, coordinated across administrative lines and with, say, me running the show, can a terrible outcome be prevented."

"What outcome?" scoffed the king.

"Sire," I intoned, "I can foresee the day when the American colonies break apart from their homeland to reform into a powerful republic."

"Bah!" cried the king. "Nonsense and fiddlesticks!"

My dear reader may perhaps wonder at my instinctive sense and ability to read the future. 'Tis true that I have always possessed an ability to see future events quite clearly, especially upon recollection. And so it is with this particular scene wherein I warn the king of the coming War with the American Colonies—I recalled it all especially vividly directly after the War with the American Colonies, when I sat down to gather my thoughts and try to recollect how, exactly, I predicted that it would all happen just as it did. To my delight and astonishment, without too taxing an effort, I was soon able, from the vantage point of the present day, to recall with absolute clarity how, precisely, I knew that it would happen.

Later, of course, during the actual war, the king summoned me to his presence.

"Spain is behind this, am I right?" he asked.

"Sire, there is no evidence of Spanish involvement."

"Go over everything. Find out what you can."

"Sire, I assure you, Spain is not a party to this belligerence. France, sire, France is—"

"Talk to me not of France! The devil take France! I want Spain punished!"

From *A House United: My Life with Abraham Lincoln*, by Richard Clarke:

". . . oh, just some foolish trifle my wife has her heart set on." The president dallied slightly with his cravat. "The whole thing is tedious to me, of course, but she so wants to get out. It's been such a long war, Dick."

I stood forcefully before him. "Sir, please, don't go to the theater tonight."

"Dick, my friend, I don't want to go to the theater tonight. But my wife insists. She's read something in one of those women's journals about this new English play, and she simply won't be deterred. It's done, Dick. It's my wife, and there's no way out of it."

The president chuckled.

"Sir," I pressed on, "there's been chatter in the system, and some of our HUMINT assets are reporting increased activity among certain insurgent groups. It's our belief, sir, that some group or groups are coalescing to attempt an attack on you, sir. They're planning to take you out."

"A little late, wouldn't you say? I mean, we won."

"Sir, I implore you to heed my advice. Don't go to the theater tonight. Instead, please give me the resources to create a cross-platform administrative working group with the authority and presidential imprimatur to fight the insurgents and their splinter groups."

"Mr. Clarke, I'm late."

From *A Noise in the Hawaiian Sky: My Work with FDR*, by Richard Clarke:

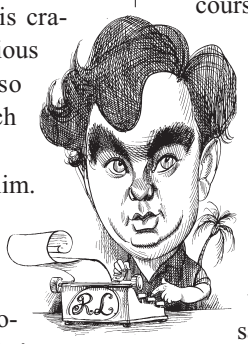
". . . and in conclusion, sir, it is my firm prediction that we should expect a sneak attack on one of our Pacific bases—and as I've made clear, my specific projection is that it will be Pearl Harbor—within the next seven to ten days."

The president thought about this while he polished his cigarette holder.

"What about the Nazis?" he asked.

"Sir, at this time, I don't believe the German forces are involved."

"Not involved?" he laughed. "Of course they're involved! Look, get into all of this. Go over everything. Then come back and show me how the Nazis are connected."



"But sir! What about Pearl Harbor?"

"Dick, I like you. You're smart. But no one can predict the future that clearly. I'm not saying that the Japs won't eventually try some kind of attack. But surely they'll wait until January, or February . . ."

"Sir! I'm telling you!" I cried out angrily. "It's going to happen sometime between December 6th and December 8th. I'm sure of it!"

He thought about this.

"And how do the Italians fit into all of this?" he asked.

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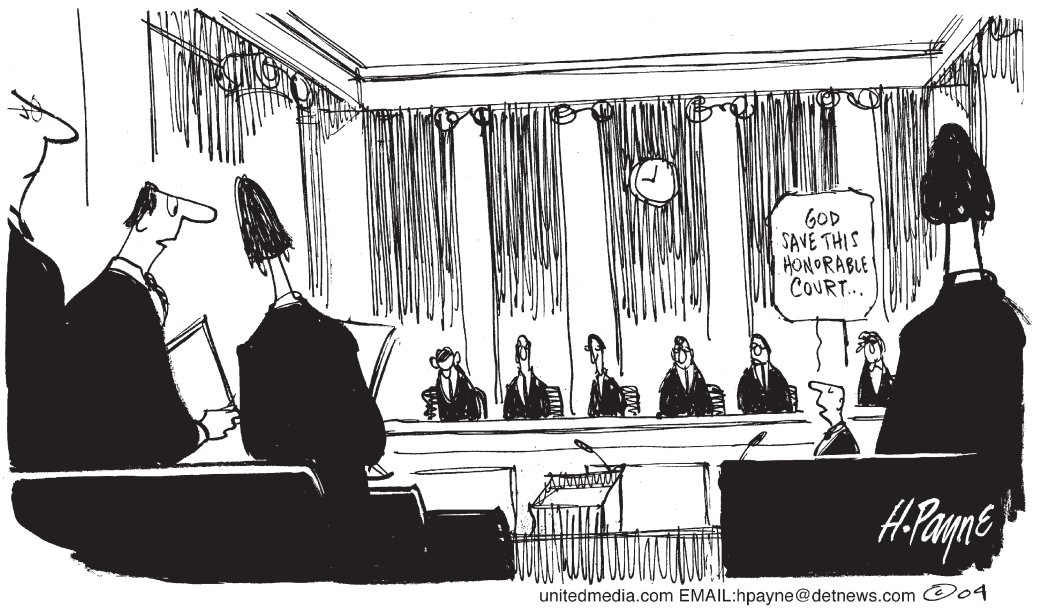
HELP!!!!



"THE SUPREMES WILL HEAR ARGUMENTS ON WHETHER 'GOD' BELONGS IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE... AFTER THE COURT'S MARSHAL OPENS WITH THE TRADITIONAL PRAYER."

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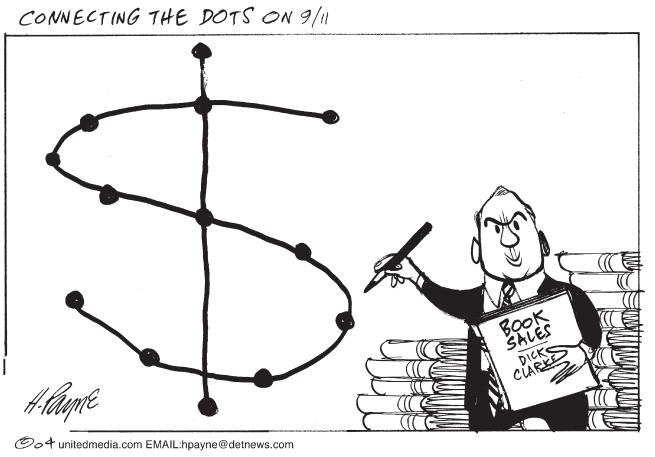
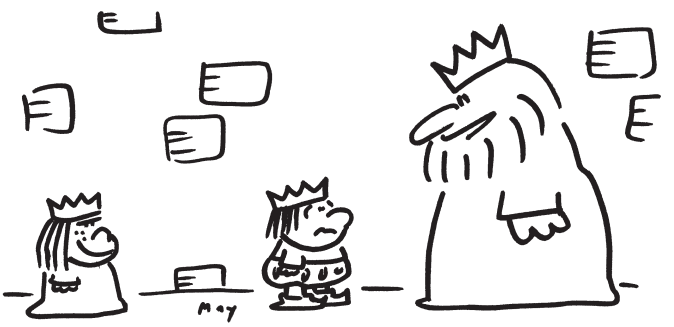
Back to '32

Kerry's playing Roosevelt,
Bush is cast as Herb
When the breadlines intertwined
Cityscape and burb;
But the problem bugging John's
Retrospective ploy
Is the missing Hoovervilles
For the hoi polloi.

—W. H. von Dreele





"She's just teasing you—princes don't need Senate confirmation."

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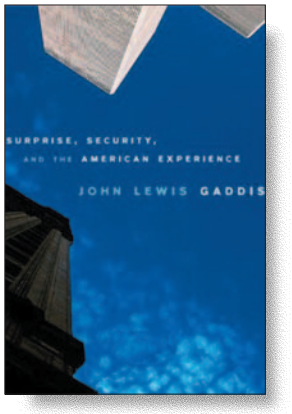
Wars New and Old



Surprise, Security, and the American Experience, by John Lewis Gaddis (Harvard, 160 pp., $18.95)

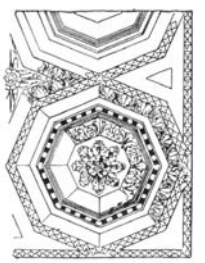
VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

In this small book—141 pages of text—John Lewis Gaddis assesses America's role in the world after 9/11. His broad goal is to give readers a breather from the 24-hour news cycle, and to ask them to look instead at these traumatic events in the broad sweep of American history. The book originated as a series of lectures at the New York Public Library in 2002, and retains that style—with occasional colloquialisms and sentence fragments—but it reads well, without either pretension or forced informality.

Gaddis's first lecture is a meditation on the 19th-century background of some now-controversial concepts, including "preemption," "unilateralism," and "hegemony." His intent is neither to justify nor to denigrate such policies, but rather to remind us that very similar approaches are the stuff of American history—and that their efficacy and morality usually depended on the particular historical situation in which they occurred. Andrew Jackson invaded Spanish Florida, ostensibly to stop raids and plundering across the border. American presidents simply annexed Texas and California, on the principle that such frail, embryonic republics were not viable and were thus likely to fall into the hands of other—and surely hostile—powers, which would inevitably end up threatening American security.

John Quincy Adams in his rash youth proclaimed that the U.S. should disconnect from "all European interests and politics." Most landmark American initiatives that followed—from Washington's Farewell Address and the Monroe Doctrine to John Hay's Open Door Policy in China and America's "associated" role in World War I—were in the same spirit. Compared with what most others in Europe were doing at the time, our go-it-alone stance served the country, and often the world, pretty well.

Gaddis reminds us of the moral ambiguity of many of these acts: It was, for example, provocative to grab Texas. But would the state's American residents in 2004 really wish to give it back and live under Mexican rule? Instead of preening in the cheap moral arrogance of the present, Gaddis asks us to walk in our ancestors' shoes, and share their fears—and then decide whether their policies made present-day America a better or a worse place. All this is both sensible and salutary.



In his second lecture, Gaddis reminds us that for much of the 20th century events overtook the old unilateral approach. Wilson talked of peace, but took us to war and then vainly tried to reconfigure the world according to his own utopian principles. Franklin Roosevelt likewise talked grandly of 19th-century isolationism, but after Pearl Harbor realized that America needed alliances and collective action to defeat the fascists. He and Truman both felt that preemption—whether against the rising Japanese of the late 1930s or, afterward, against the Soviets—would only alienate the allies that were so critically needed in the new global struggle. And in the subsequent nuclear age, such cooperation and restraint continued to make sense. In other words, 30 or so presidents of the last two centuries might find the current fury over the "new" muscular American approach of the post-9/11 era rather puzzling; different strategic needs require different responses. Cookie-cutter diplomacy and deductive moral smugness won't serve the purpose.

The third lecture brings us to the 21st century, and to yet another stage in the way we deal with security issues. After 9/11, America didn't keep to the multilateral framework that emerged after World War II—but it didn't revert to its original unilateralism either. Terrorist enclaves in rogue states with ready access to global technology have made the U.S. more vulnerable, even as it exercises unprecedented global military power. Gaddis is largely sympathetic to President Bush's war against terror and to the U.S. efforts against al-Qaeda and the Taliban; he thinks most past presidents would probably have done about the same thing.

He also believes that the Iraqi enterprise—with its broader implications for consensual government in the Middle East—may be the boldest American foreign-policy gambit in recent history. Yet Gaddis has his doubts about the viability of implanting democracy in a tribal culture like Iraq, further brutalized by over three decades of Baathism. He offers no real alternative (who has, really, other than the far Left with its call for unilateral withdrawal?), but is open to the notion that a "liberal autocracy" in the manner of Singapore or Indonesia might work for a while. Perhaps even "an empire of liberty" under the aegis of the benevolently imperial United States could offer just as good an interim solution to such failed states in recovery.

Rather than talking wildly of oil, Halliburton, or neoconservative conspiracies, Gaddis recognizes that addressing

Mr. Hanson is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, and author most recently of *Between War and Peace* (Random House).

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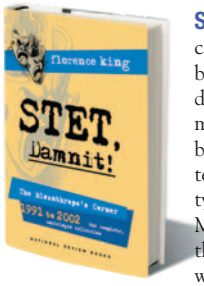

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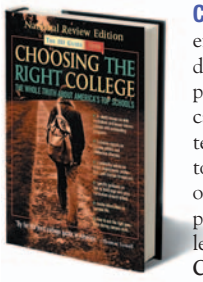

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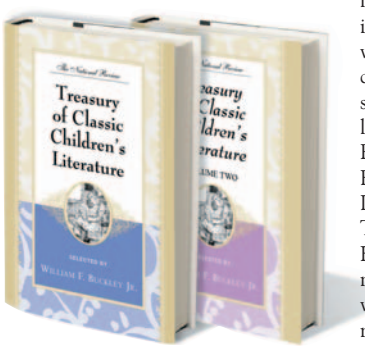

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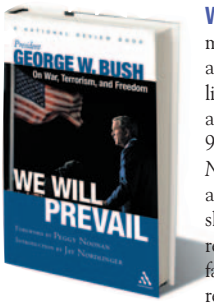

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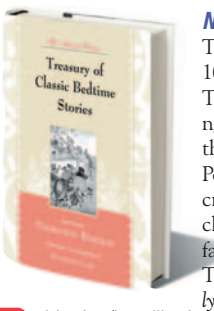

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through occasional preemption and unilateralism the mess created by rogue societies is a prudent approach to U.S. national security. Yet we should worry a lot about nemesis: The arrogance that will inevitably arise from single-handedly setting things right will cost us lives and treasure, and inevitably offend others, generating both petty envy and justifiable concern for their own autonomy. Perhaps, he concludes, we should consider some sort of global federalism among Westernized societies, all of which have a stake in seeing the world gravitate toward liberal values.

In his final lecture, Gaddis pleads for a new confidence in American values, and suggests that we follow a middle way that accepts the need to fight for those values but also to pay far more attention to how we affect others abroad.

All this is a sober reflection on current events, and a needed reminder that President Bush is acting in line with a long American tradition, even if Gaddis thinks he could learn from FDR's political savvy when it comes to getting along with allies. But there are no sweeping new proposals in this modest essay. Professor Gaddis seems to think that his call for patriotism might startle his "postmodernist" colleagues at Yale, but the general reader will find his recommendations pretty mainstream, if not at times timid. He ends the book, for example, as follows: "All of which brings me around to answering a question another of my undergraduates asked in the dark and fearful days that followed September 11th: 'Would it be OK for us to be patriotic?' Yes, I think it would." Radical stuff, I guess, for Yale these days; but most students at Cal State wouldn't have to ask and wouldn't wait to be told.

And skeptics could pose a couple of legitimate questions that Gaddis does not address. What exactly should the U.S. do when multilateral institutions and allies alike are unwilling to risk blood and money for Gaddis's new vision of a federated world, whether in the Balkans, Afghanistan, or Iraq? How do you convince a Spanish electorate that voting to appease terrorists 72 hours after an attack is not going to provide for the future security of Europe?

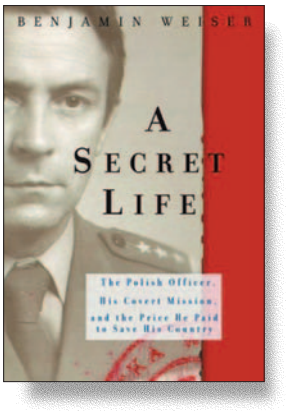
And was it really the U.S. that changed the Atlantic Alliance? Was it not, rather, the new Europe, no longer facing 300 Soviet divisions, that changed its attitude? Read, for example, the idiotic proclamations of European Commission president Romano Prodi, who, in the wake of the recent Spanish mass murder, assured Europe that "it is clear that using force is not the answer to resolving the conflict with terrorists." Consider, too, France's hostility to our "unilateralism." When it blows up a Greenpeace ship, intervenes alone in the Ivory Coast, and sells a nuclear reactor to Saddam, France offers ample proof of its own unilateralism—and exposes its criticism of the U.S. as the product of irrational envy and arrogance. Perhaps the most recent atrocity in Spain, with promises of others to follow elsewhere, will test sorely the fuzzy European notion of U.N. solidarity and its own collective defense apart from the U.S.

This is a sober reflection on current events, and a needed reminder that President Bush is acting in line with a long American tradition.

Once Gaddis reaches the present era in these essays we yearn for some "shock and awe" in lieu of generalizations and feel-good platitudes. He is a fair and responsible scholar, but still, on occasion, repeats caricature. He writes, for example, that America's new liberal empire, as envisioned by the Bush administration, will "extend democracy everywhere" by force or suasion. But I don't see anyone in the administration seriously readying the country for intervention in Syria, Libya, or Iran. As I understand the Bush Doctrine, it is to remove only particular rogue regimes that harbor terrorists who threaten the U.S. America has in fact shown only restraint toward a Tehran, a Beirut, or a Damascus.

In sum, this is not a profound book, but a sensible one. Its circumspection and even-handedness reflect well on a very learned scholar who offers us solace from our past instead of the usual melodrama about the present. **NR**

Pride of Poland



A Secret Life: The Polish Officer, His Covert Mission, and the Price He Paid to Save His Country, by Benjamin Weiser (PublicAffairs, 400 pp., $27.50)

RADEK SIKORSKI

THE subject of this remarkable book, Col. Ryszard Kukliński, died in a Tampa military hospital on February 10. His had been one of the most dangerous—and successful—intelligence careers of the Cold War. Recipient of the CIA's Distinguished Intelligence Medal, he was the West's most important source in the Warsaw Pact between the time of Oleg Penkovsky's reports during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the end of the Cold War. Although only a colonel, Kukliński was more valuable than several generals put together: He was director of the operational-planning directorate of the Polish general staff and liaised between Warsaw and Moscow. Over nine years, he delivered 40,265 pages of documents, including plans of Soviet exercises of the invasion of Western Europe, the location of Soviet wartime command bunkers, plans for the imposition of martial law in Poland, and the details of numerous weapons. He gave successive U.S. administrations a direct

Mr. Sikorski is executive director of the New Atlantic Initiative at the American Enterprise Institute.

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insight into the planning of Warsaw Pact militaries and became the standard by which other intelligence from behind the Iron Curtain was judged. Kukliński avoided detection. He was exfiltrated from Poland, with his family, only after being compromised by a leak from the U.S. government.

Sentenced to death by the Communist regime, Kukliński lived to see a free Poland quash all charges against him, and to return to his native land in triumph in 1998. He was hosted to lunch by the prime minister and showered with the honorary citizenships of several Polish cities, all during the very week that the U.S. Senate voted to allow Poland into NATO. Given the fate of most defectors from the Soviet bloc—some of them still face criminal sentences in their native lands—this is a story of heroism and accomplishment with a remarkably happy end. Yet it is not an entirely happy story and Kukliński did not die a satisfied man. Acceptance of his deeds came late, grudgingly, and still divides public opinion in Poland, testifying to the resilience of the Communist canon of Poland's recent history.

His diminutive figure casts in sharp relief all the dilemmas that are spared the lucky citizens of free countries that have never been occupied. If your country has been taken over by a regime that is an agent of a foreign power, is it legitimate to use treachery to topple that regime? Is a country run by a repulsive ideology still your country—right or wrong—or do you owe loyalty to the nation rather than to the alienated state? Does patriotism have to be rooted in higher values or does tribal solidarity trump all? Finally, can one man be so sure of his moral compass and the consequences of his actions as to take it upon himself to judge that a normally distasteful act will serve the greater good? Kukliński provokes all these questions in Poland and depending how you answer them you fall into the post-Communist or post-Solidarity camps. Tell me about Kukliński, they say, and I will tell you who you are.

The great value of Benjamin Weiser's thorough book is that, for the first time, we can follow Kukliński's story not just from reminiscences many years after the events, but from contemporary documents. Weiser obtained access to virtually the entire CIA file on the Kukliński operation, and we can therefore be confident that little of substance will be added in future accounts.

What comes shining through in Weiser's story is not just Kukliński's idealistic motivation but the kind of selfless patriotism that is usually felt by men from nations that have just faced the abyss of extermination. A witness to Warsaw's wartime martyrdom—his father had been murdered by the Nazis—Kukliński was in many ways a typical Pole of his generation. He tried to lead a normal life after the war, accommodating himself to the new Communist Poland by joining the army and the Party. He contacted the Americans only in the early 1970s, partly out of disgust at the invasion of Czechoslovakia and partly because he was alarmed at what Soviet invasion plans against Western Europe would mean for Poland. Because the Warsaw Pact enjoyed superiority over the West in conventional arms, NATO planned to respond to an attack with nuclear weapons—but because an attack against the USSR would provoke a full-blown strategic nuclear retaliation, NATO planned to nuke the Second Strategic Echelon of Soviet forces as they streamed West: across Poland. Kukliński told me on one occasion that Soviet maps even showed areas—tails broadening east with the prevailing wind—that would be contaminated after hundreds of warheads struck. Was it treasonous for a Polish officer to try to preempt such a scenario, or was it treasonous to go along with it? One can't help agreeing with the 30 Communist generals who wrote—in a public letter protesting Kukliński's exoneration—that "if he is a hero, then we are traitors."

Tell me about Kukliński, they say, and I will tell you who you are.

Kukliński did not see himself as a spy at all, but rather as an officer making contact with the U.S. army in furtherance of a potential conspiracy that could upset Soviet invasion plans. The CIA's involvement was kept a secret from him for a while and he only reluctantly agreed to act alone by passing information. In case of war, his contribution could have been decisive: By supplying the U.S. with details about the wartime command bunker he made it possible to stop the Soviets by liquidating the Soviet leadership instead of liquidating Poland. As Zbigniew Brzezinski—one of the few U.S. officials who had access to raw Kukliński data—told Marshal Kulikov, the former Warsaw Pact supreme commander, many years later, the entire Soviet command, including Kulikov, would have been dead within three hours of a Soviet attack on NATO.

While increasing the odds of a Western victory, Kukliński also helped preserve the peace. The insight he gave Western decision makers, often almost in real time, prevented the kind of miscalculation that could have sparked an uncontrollable escalation. In the fall of 1980, for example, Brezhnev was planning to crush Solidarity with a full-scale invasion of Poland. Kukliński's information on the plans helped President Carter make pointed, well-timed warnings to the Soviets, which arguably prevented the invasion and what would have been a major East–West confrontation.

Kukliński was hurt by the early lack of recognition from his countrymen for what he did, particularly from Solidarity veterans. President Lech Walesa, whom Kukliński worshipped, failed to lift a finger in his defense. Adam Michnik, the left-wing dissident, befriended General Jaruzelski, the martial-law dictator, instead of Kukliński. But the mood is shifting. As Poland takes its place among Western allies and the effects of Communist brainwashing wane, Kukliński is seen less and less as a foreign spy and more and more as "Poland's first officer in NATO." Now that he does not have to appease Communist-era generals, Walesa has relented and calls Kukliński a hero. He will be buried in Poland with military honors. Kukliński joins Claus von Stauffenberg in the pantheon of tragic heroes who betrayed their state to try to save their country. Benjamin Weiser's book—lucid, authoritative, and unputdownable—is a must-read for scholars of the Cold War, and for all of us who lived in the shadows of totalitarianism and enjoy the fruits of the ultimate triumph of liberty. **NR**

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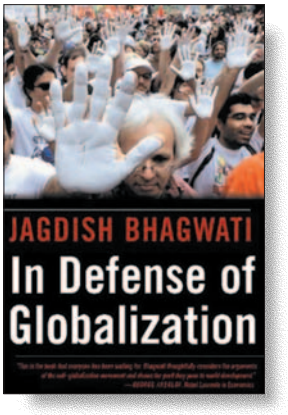
The Road to Wealth



In Defense of Globalization,
by Jagdish Bhagwati
(Oxford, 320 pp., $28)

DANIEL T. GRISWOLD

PUBLIC debate over globalization and free trade often sounds like an Abbott and Costello routine, with opposing sides using the same words but meaning something entirely different by them. At other times, they speak different languages, with skeptics employing the imagery of barefoot children toiling in sweatshops run by multinationals, while advocates of globalization marshal tables of data that show life is really getting better for hundreds of millions of poor people in countries opening up to the global economy. And the rest of the time it is a dialogue of the deaf, with neither side even listening to the other.

A large share of the blame lies with the defenders of globalization, for failing to make an emotionally appealing case for the human liberty to engage in commerce across international borders. Economists are notorious for dealing in abstractions, when the audience hungers for flesh-and-blood stories about real people. Jagdish Bhagwati's ambitious new book, *In Defense of Globalization*, fills many of those holes in the pro-globalization argument. Bhagwati, a Columbia University economics professor and author of many books on trade, makes all the right economic arguments, but without the flurry of statistical correlations often used to make the case. Instead, he tells the story of how globalization has delivered a better standard of living in less developed countries, and how experiments with protectionist "import substitution" policies have systematically failed.

Sprinkled throughout the book are literary and cultural allusions; you are as likely to encounter Shakespeare, Dickens, Dostoevsky, or T. S. Eliot as an empirical table or chart. That is not to say the book is fuzzy in its thinking; a relentless economic logic suffuses its pages, but that logic expresses itself through narrative arguments and examples rather than merely through numbers. On trade, Bhagwati is more a New Democrat than a free-market purist. "As an economist normally accused of being 'the world's foremost free trader,'" he writes, "I have always argued for freer trade, not as an objective but rather (in the context of the poor nations such as India, from where I come) as an often powerful weapon in the arsenal of policies that we can deploy to fight poverty."

His book takes the globalization argument into enemy territory. Bhagwati has done his homework on the anti-globalization groups and what animates them: a discontented brew of anti-capitalism, anti-corporatism, and anti-Americanism. He quotes liberally from the anti-globalization critics, confronting their best arguments rather than knocking down straw men, and acknowledging up front the complexities and ambiguities of the debate rather than painting everything in black and white.

Bhagwati meets the critics head on by examining globalization's impact on children, women, the poor, democracy, labor rights, the environment, and culture. The case that globalization has benefited the poor "has centered on a two-step argument: that trade enhances economic growth, and that growth reduces poverty." He contrasts the failure of protectionism to deliver prosperity in post-colonial India and other countries with the progress and development in East Asia and other more outward-oriented countries. The growth spurred by globalization has not only expanded the pie but has done so in a way that is "socially benign" and possesses "a human face."

On the emotional issue of child labor, Bhagwati establishes the necessary facts, then distills the argument: "Poor parents, no less than rich parents, generally want the best for their children. Poverty is what drives many to put their children to work rather than into school. Parents will choose to feed their children instead of schooling them if forced to make a choice. When incomes improve, poor parents can generally be expected to respond by putting children back in school." And this is indeed what has happened in countries where opening to trade has raised incomes. For example, a recent study of rice prices in Vietnam found that older girls are typically the first to go back to school when the family can afford it.

And simply demanding that poor countries eliminate child labor can easily backfire. Bhagwati cites the case of the Bangladeshi textile industry in 1993. That year, Congress seemed poised to pass Sen. Tom Harkin's Child Labor Deterrence Act, which would have banned imports of textiles made by child workers. Anticipating its passage, the Bangladeshi industry dismissed 50,000 children from factories. Most of those children did not end up in school but instead fell into prostitution and other "occupations" far more degrading than weaving cloth in a factory.

In two meaty chapters, Bhagwati chops the legs out of the argument—heard frequently in the Democratic primary debates—that the U.S. must impose labor and environmental standards on poor countries in any future trade agreements. He points to evidence establishing that U.S. multinationals do not seek out less developed countries with low standards; they locate most of their affiliates in other high-wage, high-standard countries, and when they do invest in poor countries, they invariably pay wages and maintain standards far above those prevailing in the local economy. The result

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is not a "race to the bottom," but a race to the top. An inescapable implication is that if the Democrats succeed in withholding U.S. trade and investment from poor countries because they are poor, it will mean slower growth in those countries: fewer girls studying in school, and more working in farms, factories, and brothels.

The only discordant notes in the book are on capital controls and go-slow reforms for countries in transition. Bhagwati supports the free movement of goods, but not of capital—believing that short-term capital flows can destabilize emerging economies. But here he makes the mistake of confusing cause and effect. Short-term capital typically flees emerging economies because of a loss of confidence in the stability of domestic markets. Capital controls can hold those investments captive for a while, but they cannot substitute for real reforms. Bhagwati also takes aim at "the 'shock therapy' of excessively rapid reforms that devastated Russia," as if its economy had not been a mess before those reforms. The root of Russia's lingering economic problems is not too much capitalism, but half-hearted reforms implemented clumsily by a corrupt bureaucracy run by too many ex-Communists. If overly aggressive market reforms are to blame for Russia's problems, why are those former Soviet bloc countries that reformed even more aggressively—such as Poland, Estonia, and the Czech Republic—doing so much better, and those that have lagged behind even Russia's tepid reforms—such as Ukraine and Belarus—doing even worse?

These quirks are easily forgiven in a book brimming with engaging arguments and good sense. *In Defense of Globalization* will encourage the faithful who believe in economic freedom as a value worth pursuing in and of itself, but also those more pragmatic souls who see it as a necessary if less-than-lovable means to achieve poverty reduction and other worthy social goals. Of all the books defending globalization, Jagdish Bhagwati's may offer the best chance to reach those readers not fatally blinded by anti-market ideology. **NR**

New Light on Frost

Elected Friends: Robert Frost and Edward Thomas to One Another, edited by Matthew Spencer (Handsel, 224 pp., $24)

The Poems of Edward Thomas (Handsel, 148 pp., $17)

JEFFREY HART

A major writer is a world in which discoveries are always to be made. No matter how much we know about Frost, this elegant and concentrated book makes discoveries about him, both biographical and analytical; and the new edition of Edward Thomas's poems will introduce many to the valuable work of Frost's "elected friend." The word "elected" is used in the Calvinist sense also employed by Goethe in *Elective Affinities*: the chosen, the seemingly inevitable. Each of them powerfully assisted the other in his emergence as a poet.

Elected Friends brings together a number of materials in an important critical act: focusing on what Frost was discovering about his medium. First, we have a bit of biography, well laid out. Frost, going on 40, had published a few poems in provincial newspapers, farm journals, and the like. With his wife Elinor he sailed for England in August 1912. He thought he must finally achieve recognition as a poet—or give up. At their cottage, he spread out on the floor his poems, published and unpublished, arranging them into a plot of sorts about the development of a poet. The final poem, "Reluctance," shows that Frost *could* write in something like the grand style and announces the fact of a major poet. In April 1913, his collection *A Boy's Will* was published in London. The word "will" is important, a phrase from Longfellow, but meant to distance Frost from Longfellow and to align him instead with the William James of *The Will to Believe*. His roll of the dice in 1912 was an act of will. Frost in England made his luck: He was "discovered" by Ezra Pound. *A Boy's Will* was a critical success; in 1914 came *North of Boston*, which made Frost famous.

Edward Thomas, an established English critic, published three reviews of *North of Boston*. Included here, these demonstrate remarkable acumen. Frost's use of language pointed the way for Thomas, as did his method of seeing parables in unexpected places: parables, not pantheism. The two men had met in London and experienced their "election" in a running conversation about poetry and much else. They were together about a year and a half, Frost sailing for New York in February 1915, Thomas enlisting in the army in July 1915. Their very rich total correspondence here lasts until Thomas was killed at Arras in 1917.

Thomas produced some 50 very fine poems and clearly had been decisively enabled by Frost's genius and concentrated will. Thomas, in return, had provided Frost with highly intelligent appreciation; Frost said that Thomas "gave me standing as a poet." The death of Thomas inspired a number of Frost's greatest poems. All of this the books under review

MONEY

Money is a kind of poetry.
—Wallace Stevens

Money, the long green,
cash, stash, rhino, jack
or just plain dough.

Chock it up, fork it over,
shell it out. Watch it
burn holes through pockets.

To be made of it! To have it
to burn! Greenbacks, double eagles,
megabucks and Ginnie Maes.

It greases the palm, feathers a nest,
holds heads above water,
makes both ends meet.

Money breeds money.
Gathering interest, compounding daily.
Always in circulation.

Money. You don't know where it's been,
but you put it where your mouth is.
And it talks.

—DANA GIOIA

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here bring to a remarkable focus.

The analytical illumination centers on the nature of language and Frost's use of it. Pound was—inevitably?—the one to define this. In 1912 (*Patria Mia*), Pound noticed a distinctive quality of the English language, something in the collective temper that strengthened it and gave it fiber: "a race conviction that words scarcely become a man." One undertakes to keep quiet until there is something worth saying. This is a major formulation for modern writing. Hemingway a few years later worked with this knowledge. In *A Farewell to Arms*, Catherine's fiancé has been killed in battle. Near the end of the novel, dying, she corrects her lover, Lt. Henry, as he blathers:

> "You're all right, Cat," I said. "You're going to be all right."
> "I'm going to die," she said; then waited and said, "I hate it."

The necessary style has passed from the fiancé to Catherine, now to Lt. Henry; in the last three pages of the novel Henry walks away from the hospital having spoken to the hospital personnel with the Style. More often than not in Hemingway, it is the heroine who has the Style (quiet, feminist critics, and listen). After five acts of the wonderfully voluble Prince Hamlet, his last words hit with terrific force: "The rest is silence." Hemingway at his best strives toward that silence—and Frost too knows how to use it.

Frost, well aware of the odds on the Western Front, was profoundly moved by Thomas's enlistment in 1915. He knew that words scarcely became a man at a time like this, writing to Thomas in France: "You rather shut me up by enlisting. Talk is almost too cheap." Somewhat contradictorily, he put this in a strong poem:

> France, France, I know not what is in my heart.
> But God forbid that I should be more brave
> As watcher from a quiet place apart
> Than you are fighting in an open grave.
>
> Not mine to say you shall not think of peace.
> Not mine, not mine: I almost know your pain.

Those last two lines declare the limits of words, sharpening their edges. Frost never published this poem: Words scarcely became a man. It is that awareness that presses Frost's language into concentrated power, charges ordinary words with unexpected meaning. Another example, the three words "not to keep." In the poem of that title, inspired by Thomas, a soldier is wounded and sent home to recuperate with his wife. But he must go back to the Front:

> She dared no more than ask him with her eyes
> How was it with him for a second trial.
> And with his eyes he asked her not to ask.
> They had given him back to her, but not to keep.

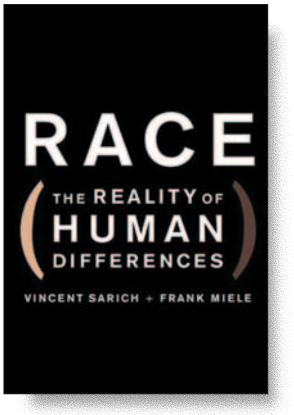
Not a word in this poem is out of the ordinary. Frost makes the last three extraordinary.

The sonnet "The Oven Bird" (1916) is one of Frost's many verse manifestos expressing his poetic mission. This drab feathered creature

> says the highway dust is over all.
> The bird would cease and be as other birds
> But that he knows in singing not to sing.
> The question that he frames in all but words
> Is what to make of a diminished thing.

The verb "make" there has a great deal of reach, but every word counts. In Hemingway, the pressure comes from death; in Frost, from New England skepticism. In his famous "Birches" he dares to write against Dante. When he is lost in the dark wood, Frost thinks of a boy swinging on a birch tree up "toward heaven," then back to earth: "Earth's the right place for love: / I don't know where it's likely to go better." This is precise. He does *not* know; this is not the arrogant certainty of the village atheist. Unlike Dante, this New England individual does not appeal to a powerful tradition. In "Desert Places" (1936), he knocks Pascal: "I have it in me so much nearer home / To scare myself with my own desert places." The tough-minded Frost will have nothing to do with glamorous "terror"; the word "scare" says it all. He is above terror. Get thee gone, Sartre, Dostoevsky, Kafka. Frost has made a different world out of language, and constituted himself a one-man American Revolution. His is a "diminished thing" only so to speak. **NR**

Facing Race



Race: The Reality of Human Differences, by Vincent Sarich and Frank Miele (Westview, 304 pp., $27.50)

DAN SELIGMAN

THIS is a strange book about a strange debate. On one side of the debate are legions of left-leaning academics telling us that race is meaningless—a "social construct," divorced from physical reality and poisonous in its implications. They argue that racial categorization leads to judgments about which groups are inferior and which superior, and ends up justifying colonialism, slavery, and discrimination. Now a standard litmus test of political correctness, this anti-race perspective has been promoted by the American Anthropological Association (whose website tells us that "race is not a scientifically valid biological category"), by the American Sociological Association, by such Marxist Harvard luminaries as Richard Lewontin and the late Stephen Jay Gould, and by public television (whose three-part documentary last year, sponsored by the Ford Foundation, was titled *Race: The Power of an Illusion*). It is not absolutely necessary to be an intellectual in order to believe that race is meaningless, but—as with those long-ago pronouncements about

Mr. Seligman, a contributing editor of *Forbes*, is the author of *A Question of Intelligence: The IQ Debate in America*.

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the Soviet Union's being a democracy—it plainly helps. In an era when racial differences in DNA are increasingly identifiable, it takes ever more ingenuity to argue that the differences are phantasmal, especially when the arguers are simultaneously carrying on about the wonderfulness of race-based "diversity."

On the other side of the debate are several billion human beings who assume that race is an obvious and significant reality, and tend not to realize that this idea is controversial. Children at age three, without coaching, readily distinguish people by race. The U.S. legal system endlessly takes race for granted, does not bother to define it, and proceeds on the plausible assumption that we all know what we're talking about. Those assuming that race is real and consequential tend not to do much actual debating, so this new book is a breakthrough of sorts. If only it were a better book.

Vincent Sarich, professor emeritus of anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Frank Miele, a senior editor of *Skeptic* magazine, are here undertaking to put down the correctniks and establish that racial differences are real and worth studying. Their definition of race—strangely, not delivered until page 207—refers to "populations . . . within a species that are separated geographically from other such populations . . . and distinguishable from them on the basis of heritable features." The reference to heritability tells us that the traits in question—both physical and behavioral—have some genetic basis. It was long held by race-deniers that genetic data cannot be used to identify racial differences. In the PBS documentary, some biology students were shown registering surprise when they were unable to identify the races of other students based on six DNA markers they had been given. But the students had been shortchanged. They did not have enough markers, and those they had reflected only maternal heritage. With 73 appropriate DNA markers, one learns from this book, it is possible to state with close to 100 percent accuracy whether the ancestors of the individual who supplied them came from Europe, Africa, Asia, or the Americas.

The objections to race come from all directions, and the Sarich-Miele team generally does an effective job of shooting them down. In one familiar line of argument, racial categories are dismissed on the ground that they do not account for racial admixtures. It appears that, biologically, American blacks are on average about 25 percent white, and many other racial boundaries are undeniably blurry. But categories can be real without being discrete. There is no discrete boundary between red and yellow—both blend into orange—yet we have no reason to regard those colors as in any sense unreal. Races, say Sarich and Miele, can be thought of as what mathematicians call "fuzzy sets."

Stephen Jay Gould persistently invoked evolutionary logic to argue that race differences could not be terribly meaningful. He observed that the human species was relatively young—it may have begun migrating out of Africa as recently as 100,000 years ago, in evolutionary time a mere eyelid flicker, not nearly long enough to generate major differences among the races. In other words, there are no major differences because there *can't* be major differences—a curious position for a man who prided himself on being an empiricist. Sarich and Miele turn the evolutionary logic against Gould. They note, for openers, that the latest data suggest the migrations from Africa began only around 50,000 years ago. Then, pointing to the observed heritable differences among the resulting populations—differences not only in skin color but also in body size, cranial capacity and brain size, intelligence, physical ability, and personality—they argue that so much adaptation in so little time means that racial differences had to be enormously important for survival. The differences were not trivial, and could not have been driven by chance.

A curious fact about *Race* is that much of its text—and, on my scorecard, its most interesting material—is not directly concerned with racial differences. It deals instead with "pre-racial" issues. One question has to do with the date at which the earliest hominids separated from the apes. Sarich himself played a major role in answering this question, in the process establishing that it was far later than previously assumed. The standard answer used to be 20 million years ago. The answer today is about 5 million years ago. That was the point at which our ancestors branched off from the chimpanzee/gorilla line.

Another question on which *Race* is interesting centers on the riddle of the Neanderthals, who clearly coexisted for a time with *Homo sapiens*, yet remain totally unrepresented in our own DNA. How this came about remains a riddle, although Sarich leaves you thinking that matings between the two groups were for some reason infertile—which would itself be a riddle.

The book is at once fascinating and irritating. It exposes the race-doesn't-exist arguments as involved nonsense. It is a treasure trove of memorable evolutionary insights, as in its explanation of Polynesians' over-representation in the National Football League: Given the vast Pacific distances their ancestors had to travel in primitive outriggers, they were "selected," in the Darwinian sense, for size and upper-body strength.

And yet the book is a bumpy ride. I cannot recall reading a work that had so many major merits and yet was so sloppily written. Sentences do not parse, explanations fail to explain, weirdness abounds. Cost-benefit analysis is defined as "opportunity costs." Race is "loaded with the onus of past events." Among the sentences triggering "huh?" in the margin: "Those sympathetic to Coon believed his personal dislike of Montagu was because he thought everyone else should dislike him as well." A special embarrassment is the ninth and final chapter, titled "Learning to Live with Race," in which the authors advocate meritocratic social policies but then, by way of exemplifying their approach, add that race can and should be a factor in college admissions because "a diverse student body . . . is part of the educational experience." Coming as it does toward the end of a book that has mercilessly pilloried political correctness, this formulation got a "How sad" review in the margin. **NR**

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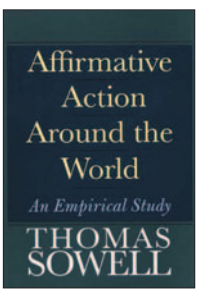
■ SHELF LIFE ■

Scholars and Poets

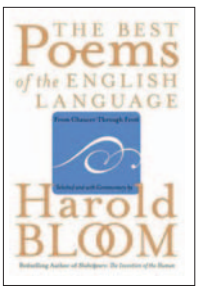
MICHAEL POTEMRA

POLEMICS about affirmative action concentrate their intensity in moral vocabulary. Defenders say the beneficiaries "deserve" preference. Opponents contend that it's "unfair" or "immoral" to treat people differently because of their skin color. Thomas Sowell's persuasive new book, *Affirmative Action Around the World: An Empirical Study* (Yale, 239 pp., $28), makes an important contribution to this debate by focusing on the facts on the ground—not just the familiar battleground of American college admissions and workplace hiring, but also the world beyond our shores. "Even a broad-brush look at what affirmative action programs have actually done in various countries reveals that a failure to achieve their goals may be the least of the problems created by these programs," Sowell writes. "Poisonous intergroup relations and real dangers to the fabric of society have also been produced by affirmative action in some countries."



The book is short, but full of cautionary tales. In India, for example, preferential policies have resulted in "minimal benefits to those most in need of them and maximum resentments and hostility toward them on the part of others." In Nigeria, attempts to reduce ethnic polarization and foster national unity through the creation of group preferences have not fared well; the policies have "given the various groups something to fight over, rather than something to bring them closer together." In the U.S., as elsewhere, "affirmative action has been a boon to those already more fortunate" because the upper-income earners in the disadvantaged group tend to reap a disproportionate amount of the benefits of the preferential policies.

These dysfunctional programs need to be buried. But that won't happen until we take Sowell's advice—and start judging affirmative action by its results rather than its rationales.



■ Of comprehensive poetry anthologies there is no shortage; to break successfully into this market one is well advised to offer a brand name. *The Best Poems of the English Language: From Chaucer Through Frost* (HarperCollins, 972 pp., $34.95) offers one of the toniest brand names in the business: The poems were selected by critic-celebrity Harold Bloom, who also offers detailed commentary on the selections. "In authentic poetry," he writes, "an excess or overflow emanates from figurative language, and brings about a condition of newness." The purpose of art, Ezra Pound instructed us, is to "make it new"; Bloom suggests that poetry reaches greatness to the precise extent that it makes the new creation appear to have been inevitable. Through its "strangeness," he writes, great poetry "is the true mode for expanding our consciousness."

Understandably, the vast majority of the poems in this anthology will not be unfamiliar, but the selection is generous and Bloom's commentary is provocative. In his discussion of Milton, for example, he writes that "if you love poetry, then you love Satan"; if *poiesis* or making is a good—a desirable and praiseworthy imitation of the work of the original Creator—its products can sometimes be so beautifully startling as to suggest a trespass upon prerogative.

■ Peter Godman is a non-Catholic scholar who has spent some time in the Vatican archives; the result of his researches is *Hitler and the Vatican: Inside the Secret Archives That Reveal the New Story of the Nazis and the Church* (Free Press, 282 pp., $27), which offers substantial insights. In the 1930s, an intricate bureaucracy—beset with its own currents and countercurrents—struggled to formulate a response to the unprecedented virulence represented by National Socialism. As early as 1934, Cardinal Pacelli, later Pius XII, was denouncing the Nazis for "preach[ing] the false and deceptive message of a new materialism of race," even as another bishop, Alois Hudal, was calling for the Church's "adaptation" to the Nazis' version of modernity. The book is a poignantly convincing depiction of men trapped between appeasement and martyrdom. "The world should see," Pacelli declared a few days after being elected Pope in 1939, "that we have done everything to live in peace with Germany." Posterity would never doubt this; before the bar of history, Pacelli would be arraigned on entirely different charges. Godman's book provides a historically sensitive contextualization of the choices Pacelli made. NR

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■ CITY DESK ■

Standing Out

RICHARD BROOKHISER

José Ortega y Gasset began his 1930 classic, *The Revolt of the Masses*, with a demographic point, a discussion of a phenomenon he called "plenitude." "Towns are full of people, houses full of tenants, hotels full of guests, trains full of travelers, cafés full of customers, parks full of promenaders, consulting-rooms of famous doctors full of patients, theatres full of spectators, and beaches full of bathers. What previously was, in general, no problem, now begins to be an everyday one, namely, to find room."

It sounds just like New York, except for the last sentence, since New Yorkers, so far from considering their plenitude a problem, start worrying when the crowd thins out. Enemies of rent control say that it populates eight-room apartments on Central Park West with wealthy couples; enemies of the hotel tax say it hurts business. If subway trains and parks are fearful no-man's-lands, that is because crime is up. Mayor Bloomberg's smoking ban empties bars; floating sewage empties beaches. Why didn't *The Producers* sell out for the rest of the century? If room can be found, someone is doing something wrong.

Still, we have to cope with the masses we are so uncomfortable living without. Human beings are not bats or wildebeest; swarming is unnatural to us. How do we manage?

One way is to be ahead of the curve. A continent may be marching at your back, but if you are Kit Carson, you can breathe. Find the budding, the fetal, the proto-trendy. Suppose you had had the first Mini Cooper? Now they are everywhere, like wheeled pugs; pugs are everywhere too. Much of the local journalism in New York—blogging, weeklies, the style and arts coverage of the *New York Times* (for what are arts but style?)—is devoted to trend-spotting. Once we read about a thing, we can't be first, at best only second. But we could still get there and do it before the tour groups from the Midwest. Behind the curve works equally well for this narrow purpose, if you are far enough behind. If you find something you like and stay with it long enough, then you might be left alone. The grave's a fine and quiet place.

Another form of crowd control is finding smaller curves. What will draw more people, *The Silmarillion: Part Nine*, or a concert of sacred music of the 12th century?

The masses could even be right. The childhood of Saruman is arguably more interesting, but you'll have to learn about it at the multiplex, while you can hear the music of the 12th century, however grating, without standing in line or finding gumwads on the underside of your armrest. Snobbery compensates for aesthetic undernourishment, and elbow room trumps everything.

Curvology takes work, and at its best is limited, for rush hour is rush hour, and we all find ourselves in it. Then New Yorkers practice seclusion—ignoring the New Yorkers who surround them. Technology has made this easy, by wiring our ears so that we can speak to chatterboxes or listen to our own personalized Top 40. This is the way of the New York novice, whose mind swoops and flaps beyond the control of the falconer. The master sits in the R train held up outside Times Square or the cab frozen on Park Avenue and meditates on the ads for skin care, or the varied ways that taxi drivers spell the name Chaudhuri.

The other way to be alone in a crowd is by branding. Ranchers distinguished their cattle by burning their hides; the New Yorker stands out from the crowd by asserting his singularity. There is only one cow in his herd, and he marks himself. He can jostle among all the others then, reveling in their presence, knowing that he is unique. Dress is the easiest way to brand. Over the years, I have seen a street person who wore an animal head, all teeth and fur—I think it was a bear, though it might have been a wolverine—as a hat, and a pair of East Village artists who dressed like the Arrow Collar man. But it is not necessary to be so extreme. Hence the traffic, not just in clothes, but in accessories—the neckties or sunglasses or jewelry or piercings that give you a tweak. The comic dilemma of New York dress-up is branding gridlock. Years ago, Chilton Williamson Jr., who was then NR's literary editor, joked about a choice he faced. Chilton wore trim conservative suits in the late Seventies, when men still aspired to look like Tony Orlando. He was having lunch with Tom Wolfe and Timothy Dickinson, an English eccentric who was known to many New York writers. Chilton said that if he wore a white suit, Wolfe would think he was being put on, while if he wore a black pinstripe, Dickinson would think *he* was.

Chilton was in a win-win situation, because whichever way he went, white or black, he would be conscious of his choice. The most effective branding is mental. The moment, and the crowd, you are in, cannot define you if you are conscious of your coming and going. You could be looking through someone's hair trying to see the way to the bar at a reception. But the crowd you were last in was different from this one, just as the crowd you will next be in will be different again. Thus you are the master of your *fête*, the captain of your soul.

Does it work? Sitting in a chair in a clothing store, like Leatherstocking on guard while my wife shopped, I flipped through two men's magazines, deep as the paper they were printed on. Both had the same ad, by a maker of hair gel, showing some vaguely Japanese punk rocker with spiked locks. The slogan was: UNLEASH YOURSELF. Maybe hearing that advice twice means that it's impossible to follow—that your self is on loan from others, from the world. Someone stepped on my grave. **NR**

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Canadian Relief

NEW YORK, MARCH 16

THE alternative of buying prescription drugs in Canada is increasingly advertised on the Internet. For instance, by Canadatrustrx.com, which answers, in a Q and A, the questions that occur to most potential shoppers.

Answering the question, Should those companies be patronized? requires the purchaser to pay some attention to the law of the land. That law says you must not buy drugs abroad. But exegesis on the law goes on all the time, and there are court rulings, for instance, in West Virginia, which manage to authorize such purchases (by not prosecuting offenders), while, in Oklahoma, there is evidence of an itch to uphold the law. Meanwhile, the head of the FDA, Dr. Mark McClellan, stresses his concern for safety. He is not trenchant on the economic question, which is what most purchasers are interested in.

What are the rules, in a free society?

1. The producer of a patented product is entitled to charge what it wishes to charge for that product, for as long as the patent is in force.

2. The government is legitimately entitled to regulate the sale of the product by ascertaining its safety.

3. If the government is a heavy purchaser of the product, it is entitled to bargain for lower prices than the producer would otherwise set.

4. If we subscribe to free trade, the consumer is entitled to search out sellers of the product who are willing to make it available cheaper than one can get it at home.

5. The producer is entitled to vary the price of its product to other countries according to myriad considerations, for instance, the ability to pay.

Enter Canadian pharmaceutical merchandisers. They get the product cheaper than U.S. consumers by buying it in bulk and pretending that their orders are intended for local consumption. If the Canada TrustRx Pharmacy moves over several years from ordering one hundred thousand Lipitor tablets to ordering one million Lipitor tablets, the producer is not likely to complain.

Who are complaining are the FDA, which says it is worried that foreign-shipped drugs may be counterfeits, or may be impure, and therefore dangerous to health; U.S. pharmacies, who stand to lose business; and fussy prosecutors who say the law is the law and people are stepping on it all over.

Who are not complaining are an increasing number of purchasers who feel the relief not only from the drugs they consume, but from the lightened drain on their wallets. Peter Jennings of ABC cited a 64-year-old nun who is taking three medications to treat high cholesterol, gout, and thyroid. "I have no health insurance. I only make $15,000 a year and I can't spend it all on medicines. Last year, I spent $1,068 on three drugs, Lipitor, Allopurinol, and Synthroid. This year I'll be spending about $640." Her attitude on the law? "When the laws are unjust, I really don't care." The FDA's attitude? "A spokesman," Mr. Jennings reports, "says the FDA looks the other way and does not enforce [the laws]. 'We don't want to punish seniors,' he said."

Those who believe in the market welcome the maneuvers of the consumer. The consumer, Milton Friedman wrote years ago, is king, and should be king. The producer—of medicines or bicycles or books—can charge what he wishes. The consumer can grope for relief, and has found some relief in Canada. The listless player in the field is the U.S. health insurers. These tell us that we must buy generic drugs where they are available, to avoid the higher cost of brand-name drugs. Why aren't they telling us that we should buy drugs in Canada? This would reduce the overhead for the health insurers, as also for the government, which marginally protects the straitened old and ill.

How Long, How Long?

NEW YORK, MARCH 19

VICE President Cheney has a difficult time when required to outline the goals of our engagement in Iraq to the extent that they go further than simply removing a tyrant and disarming his regime. This is the problem he and the president will face this summer and fall: to explain how we reconcile what is happening in Iraq with our desire to vouchsafe it democratic rule. That desire is entirely sincere; there is nothing concealed there, no underground takeover of the oil fields, no impositions on the policies adopted by the new Iraqi Governing Council. We went in order to eliminate any capacity to make weapons of mass destruction, and in order to export the blessings of democracy.

But we have not succeeded. Mr. Cheney explained, in his speech at the Reagan Library, that the terrorist goal is to "prevent the rise of a democracy." And he reassured the assembly that, of course, the terrorists would not prevail.

He is saying two things. The first, that George W. Bush and his team would not falter. We can accept this as correct, insofar as it speaks of Mr. Bush's mind and heart.

But it is not to cavil to remind ourselves of the words of Lyndon Johnson, spoken in 1965 concerning the Vietnam War: "We will not be defeated. We will not grow tired. We will not withdraw, either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement." What happened in Vietnam is that the whole scene changed, as if gradual illumination had made visible an entirely different set on the stage. The intellectuals solidified in their opposition to the war, our allies began to express doubts, other foreign-policy concerns took center stage: and we pulled out.

Nothing that protracted needs to happen in order to effectively halt our armed determination to bring democracy to Iraq. We need only two things. 1) An assertion by Democratic candidate John Kerry that, if he is elected, he will find a means of terminating the

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military enterprise in Iraq; followed by 2) his victory in November.

This last can't be achieved without the complicity of a majority of American voters. But that is not inconceivable. Mr. Cheney said, "By helping nations to build the institutions of freedom, and turning the energies of men and women away from violence, we not only make that region more peaceful, we add to the security of our own region." That is unquestionably true. As historians point out, democracies do not engage in aggressive wars.

But Donald Rumsfeld himself wondered more or less out loud last fall whether we could be confident that we were killing terrorists faster than they were being generated. We like to think we are making progress. But what is unambiguously true is that terrorist advances in technology tend to equalize their resources and those of the armies of liberation.

It is right that we should proclaim the goal of bringing democracy to Iraq, but it is presumptuous to suppose that that alone will bring ordered freedom. Democracy spoke abruptly in Spain on the matter of concerted efforts to effect regime change in Iraq. Democracy just doesn't work, much of the time.

How would the Iraqis vote, if given the option between tranquilization under a Saddam successor, or years of terrorism? The U.S. suffers from the immaterialization of an objectifiable enemy: there is no Berlin, no Tokyo, no enemy fleet. There is just John Stuart Mill.

Clarke's Problems

NEW YORK, MARCH 23

It's hard to keep in coherent order the complaints Richard Clarke, former anti-terrorism adviser, has been trying to make in the lavishly arranged welcome of his book. He got not one but (almost) two segments on *60 Minutes*, the second affecting to give both sides of the question whether Mr. Bush was hypocritical and derelict in making policy both before and after September 11, but serving, rather, to fortify the case against Bush because the defense was ill-prepared.

What Clarke is contending is that the desire of the administration to get on with a war against Iraq caused it to be indifferent to the case against al-Qaeda. This accusation is mysterious because it leans on the assumption that only al-Qaeda was guilty of terrorism, while Iraq was not.

Clarke's case rests in part on the failure of the U.S. to mobilize against terror before September 11. He cited, on *60 Minutes*, the relatively alert Clinton administration, which had reacted to the earlier bombing of a Twin Tower. Clarke spoke of a terrorist bound across the Canadian border bent on sabotage in the L.A. airport; the terrorist was detected as suspicious and carted away. The suggestion is that, in 2001, the national alert system was not properly pitched, and that the malefactors of 9/11 might, otherwise, have been frustrated.

Everybody should be willing to acknowledge that we didn't act appropriately on several leads in 2000 and 2001. There were terrorists who were in the U.S., taking flying lessons. And there was the terrorist in Arizona, spotted as suspicious but not pursued for reasons largely bureaucratic.

A dilemma is posed here. Critics of Bush rail against the Patriot Act and the Guantánamo detentions as impinging on First Amendment freedoms. Meanwhile, others are saying that Bush has not done enough. The two camps have in common only their disapproval of Mr. Bush.

It isn't easy to know exactly what the government might have done if the alert-level had been set higher than it was on 9/11. There is a certain innocence in the U.S. about foreign aggression within our boundaries. As a schoolboy during World War II, I spent many midnight hours staring at the sky looking out for Nazi bombers, which never materialized. But now we certainly need to be skeptical about young Arab males who want to come here to learn how to fly. If the objective of Mr. Clarke is to punish Mr. Bush for not being sensitive enough to security matters, let him get it said, but bearing in mind that Bill Clinton did not himself act very energetically on homeland security, bequeathing his own arrangements to George W. Bush when, in 2001, Bush came into office.

A second preoccupation of Clarke seems seems to be the focus we placed on Iraq, instead of al-Qaeda. But we went promptly to war, and successfully, against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, the terrorists' principal provisioner. The argument that we did not find weapons of mass destruction outside Baghdad has nothing to do with whether the strike against Iraq, as hornet's nest of terrorism, was strategically justified. The world knew that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction and had used them, in Iran and against the Kurds. The International Institute of Strategic Studies determined in 2002 that Iraq could have nuclear weapons within months if it obtained fissile material from abroad.

The British historian-journalist William Shawcross has a valuable narrative of the hectic events of 2003 in his book *Allies: The U.S., Britain, and Europe, and the War in Iraq*. He has a keen eye for anomalies. Chirac had called Saddam "a personal friend and a great statesman." Chirac is lucky never to have been a dissident general in Iraq. Bernard Kerik, former chief of the New York City Police Department, commissioned to organize a police department in Iraq, examined Iraqi police records and saw videos recording Saddam's tortures. These are said to have included "a tape of Saddam himself 'sitting and watching one of his military generals being eaten alive by Dobermans because the general's loyalty was in question.'"

Why does Clarke insist that our enterprise in Iraq suggests indifference to the greater threat of al-Qaeda? We have had to guard against them both, and in certain matters, al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein were indistinguishable. The Saddam-Iraq we have pursued under George W. with a large army is the same Saddam-Iraq we pursued twelve years earlier under George H. W., with an even larger army.

—Universal Press Syndicate

"The meaning of life? Look, pal—I'm a guru, not a lexicographer!"

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

The Bush Lag

PUNDITRY, like comedy, is all in the timing. You don't want to be right too soon. This unworthy thought occurred to me when I came across a moldering old clip buried under a pile of bills and realized it was a column I'd written for the *Daily Telegraph* in London just over 18 months ago. They'd put together a special supplement on the first anniversary of 9/11 and asked me if I'd say a few words on the transformation of George W. Bush's electoral fortunes. By the time I'd got 'em on paper they'd turned rather gloomy:

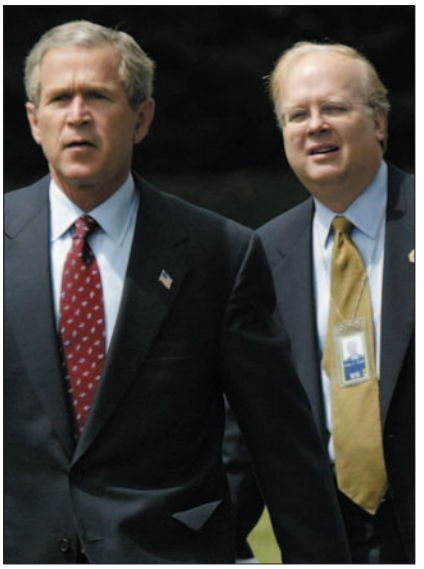
"On election day in November," I wrote, referring to the 2002 midterms, "Bush will be right back where he was on September 10th 2001: the 50% President, his approval ratings in the fifties, his 'negatives' high, the half of the country that didn't vote for him feeling no warmer toward him than if the day that 'changed the world' had never happened."

Well, I was wrong. Two months later on Election Day 2002, the Republicans clawed back the Senate and made modest gains hither and yon. It wasn't a landslide for the GOP, but it was a disaster for the Dems.

On the other hand, if you switch the date at the top of the column, it's a pretty good statement of where we are right now. Yes, yes, I know the polls are meaningless, and subjecting the American people to another seven months of ponderous, self-regarding windbaggery isn't likely to endear many folks to John Kerry. (Given the way his numbers rebounded when he took a week off in Sun Valley, I'd say his best shot at winning is to go to Bermuda till mid November.) In the end, even though everything's within the margin of error, I'd say the margin of error broadly favors Bush. This November, he'll win, and the math of the Electoral College will make it look like a solid win.

But even so: Oughtn't things to be better than this? We have a president who in Afghanistan accomplished in two months what the Soviet Union couldn't manage in ten years; who has Saddam Hussein in gaol, Colonel Qaddafi on best behavior, and the Arab League in disarray. Republican optimism shouldn't be dependent on Ralph Nader's poll numbers.

I know Karl Rove's strategy is one of incremental victories, but 2000 was way too incremental for me. And few of us thought that approach would still be necessary after 9/11. Yet despite enjoying the highest approval ratings of any president in history, Bush sat on his political capital, hoarding it like a squirrel anticipating an eight-month winter. Now winter's arrived, and the stash of nuts has mysteriously disappeared.



Not so incremental, please

It's not as if the opposition's strong. Kerry is as stiff and tedious a candidate as could be devised, his party is bereft of ideas, and the hot new liberal radio network can do no better than a flagship show called "The O'Franken Factor." Al Franken's inability to come up with a title (*Rush Limbaugh Is a Big Fat Idiot, A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*) that doesn't riff off some right-wing hit is emblematic of the Left's dependence on sour oppositionism. But up against Republican complacency, sour oppositionism—even in John Kerry's hands—can poll in the high 40s.

By contrast, it's not necessary to agree with my beleaguered boss Conrad Black's thesis about FDR to acknowledge a basic truth: that Roosevelt seized his moment. He took advantage of extreme circumstances to shift the country. After 9/11, Bush radically transformed American foreign policy, and he had a rare opportunity to do the same on the home front, to "domesticate" the War on Terror. But he chose not to. If it seems absurd that Kerry's running around promising that no more American troops will "die for oil" and simultaneously boasting of how he scuttled any drilling in ANWR, it's only a reflection of the original absurdity, courtesy of President Bush: If you can't sell the country on the need for additional domestic oil resources when you're at war with a bunch of Islamofascists from the Middle East, when can you?

Every domestic issue is also a war issue. I don't mean in the narrow sense that ANWR is an alternative to Saudi oil, but in the broader sense that opposition to ANWR is part of the cultural self-loathing promoted by the Left. From education to gun ownership, Bush could have put Democratic shibboleths on the defensive, their fetishization of Arctic mosquito herds being only the most obviously ridiculous. Instead, we now have a surreal situation where the war and domestic policy are discussed as if they're hermetically sealed off from each other.

At the end of March, France held an election. Some 50 percent of voters cast their ballots for Socialists, Communists, Fascists, and Greens. Most of the rest went for Jacques Chirac, who represents what passes for the "Right" in the Fifth Republic. Those numbers are a useful reminder of the gulf between the dispositions of the American and European electorates. But, for all the talk of "9/11 Democrats," the fact remains that far too many Americans are still unconvinced of the merits of Republican government. Bush will win in November, but the real test is how decisively he buries the 50 percent presidency. **NR**

KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS

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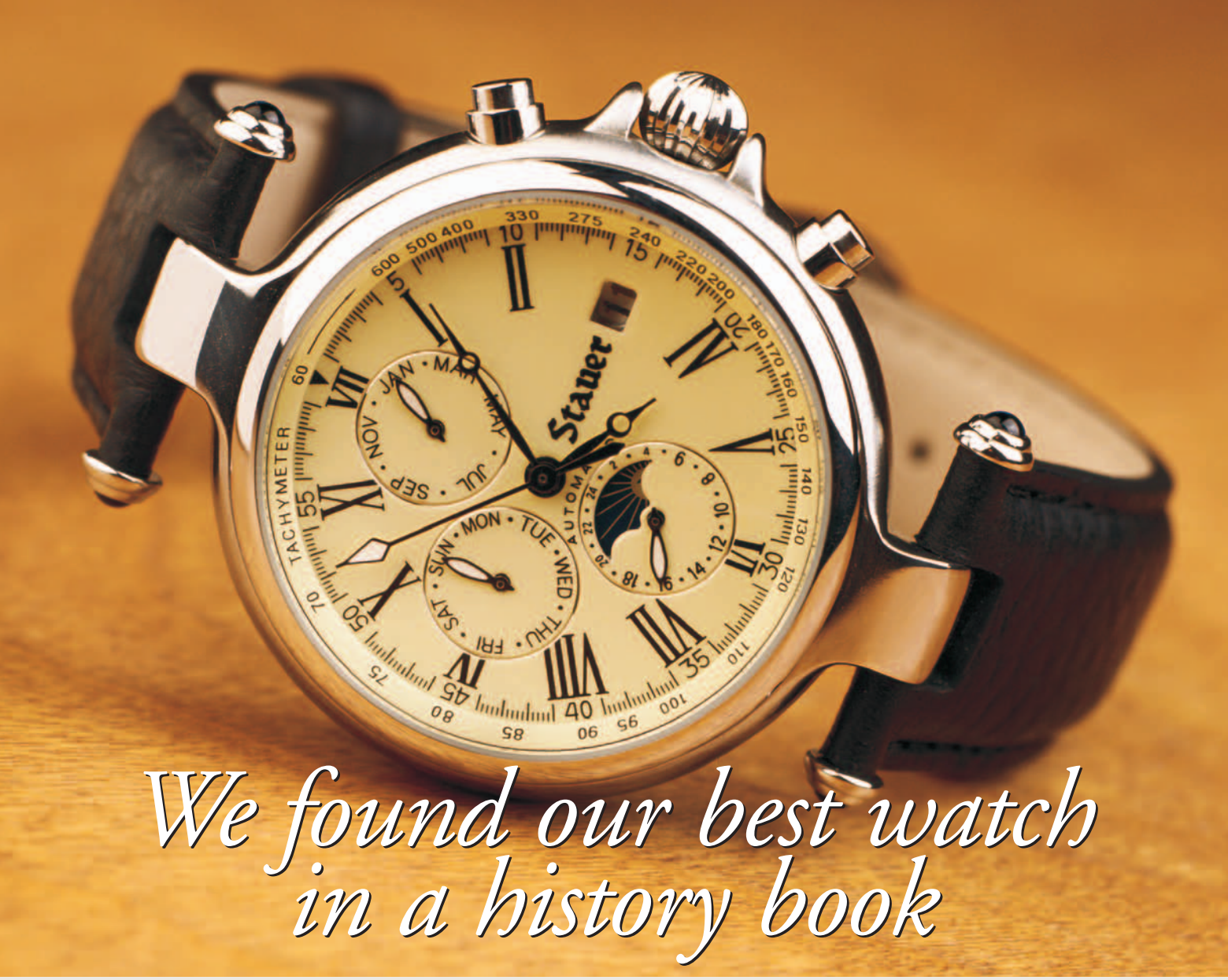

We found our best watch in a history book

In 1922, a small watchmaker in Switzerland patented the first automatic watch to display the day, month and date. Only 7 of these magnificent timepieces were ever made and this watch was almost lost to history. Today, they are so rare that one original chronograph watch would probably fetch more than $300,000 at auction.

These watches were among the most stylish of the roaring 20's. And yet no one has attempted to remake this 1922 classic until now. The Stauer watch design that you see here has been painstakingly recreated from the original functions to please even the most discerning owner. The owner of this classic chronograph watch is sure to look distinguished and set apart from the crowd. From the sweeping second hand to the Roman numerals on the unique ivory-colored face, every detail has been carefully reproduced. This Stauer reissue is a limited series, allowing you to wear a watch far more exclusive than many Rolex, Movado, TAG Heuer or Breitling watches.

The watch has a 21-jewel mechanical movement, the kind desired by fine watch collectors. We have updated this movement with kinetic power thus the watch never needs to be manually wound. The watch comes in a beautiful case and comes with both interchangeable black and brown leather bands.

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